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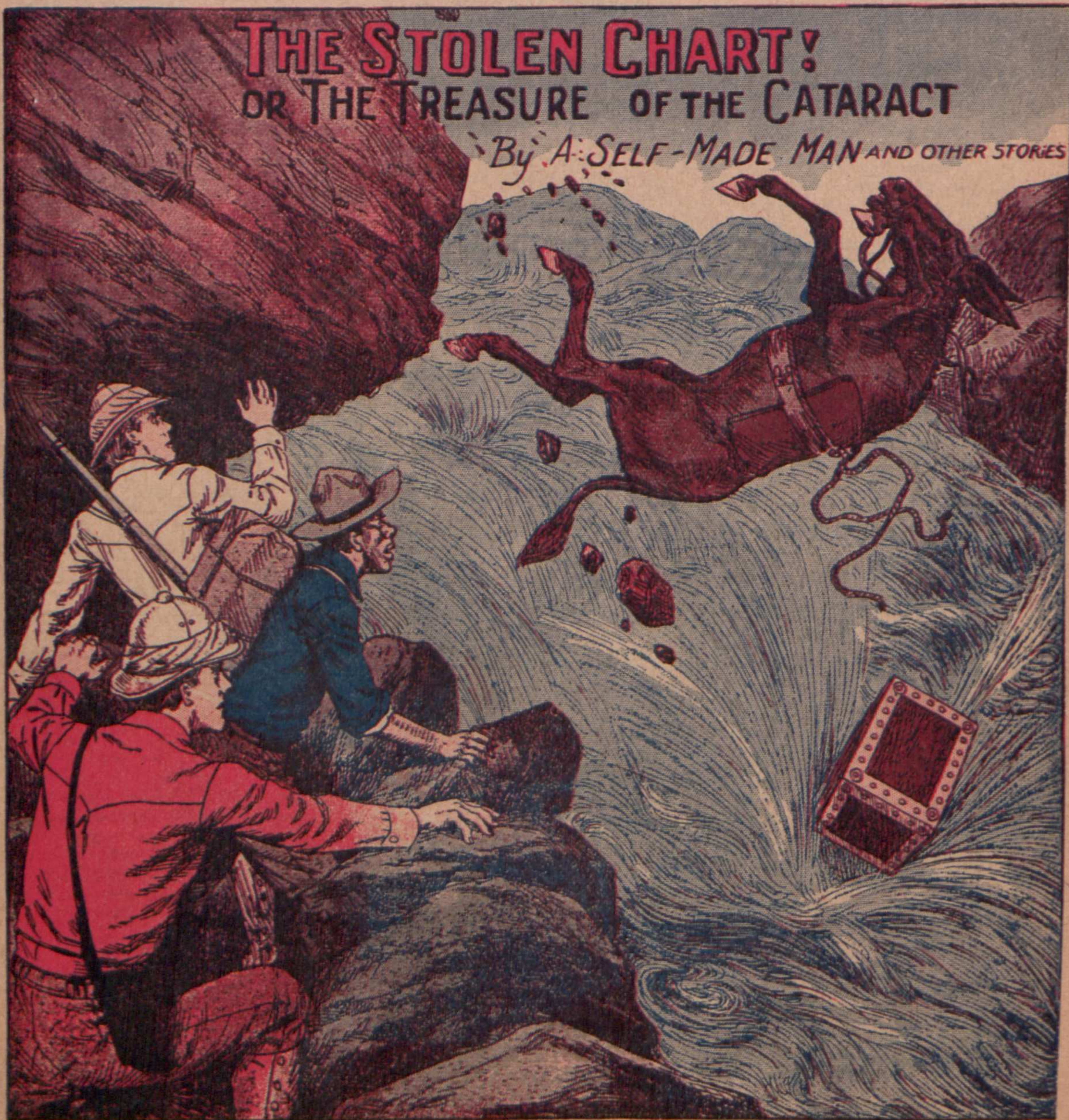
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STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

THE STOLEN CHART! OR THE TREASURE OF THE CATARACT

By A SELF-MADE MAN AND OTHER STORIES



The weight of the treasure chest was too much for the cayuse. The animal slipped, lost its balance, and was pulled over into the foaming river. Mose and the boys uttered exclamations of dismay as they saw the chest disappear.

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NEW YORK, AUGUST 27, 1920.

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THE STOLEN CHART

Or, THE TREASURE OF THE CATARACT

BY A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—The Strange Sailor.

"For the love of Pete, what do you call this thing that's coming along?" exclaimed a thick-set boy named Bill Nye, to his companion, Jack Draper, a lad of about his own age, as they were crossing a railroad bridge thrown over a deep gully, in the dusk of a summer's evening.

"What do I call it? Why, it's a man, plain enough," replied Jack. "What did you think it was—a spook?"

"But look at him! Did you ever see such a piratical-looking rooster in real life before? He's a sailor. Get on to his rolling gait."

"Why wouldn't he roll? The fellow is as drunk as a boiled owl."

"I wonder what brings him out this way?"

"If your curious on the subject, you might wait here till he comes up and ask him," chuckled Jack.

"Aw, don't be funny," growled Bill. "I ain't interested in the guy."

There were two tracks on the bridge, and between them was a plank walk wide enough for two persons to walk abreast. Many of the residents of Ringbolt village used the bridge as a short cut to a patch of beach which, sheltered by the beetling cliffs overlooking the broad Atlantic, and a curving promontory, afforded an ideal bathing ground. Bill and Jack used it regularly twice a day in going to and coming from the fish canning establishment where they worked. Thrown on their own resources through the loss of their parents, they had drifted to Ringbolt—one from Boston and the other from Portland—and their chance acquaintance had ripened into a warm friendship.

Their nomadic experiences led them, after they came together, to take up their home in a small two-roomed house, with an attic, situated on the edge of a salt marsh, fed by the ocean tides, which had been deserted for a great many years when they took possession of it. No one disputing their right to live there, they furnished it with a couple of cots, three chairs, a plain deal table, a small cook-stove, and such other necessary articles as they needed to carry on their housekeeping arrangements. Here they had dwelt for the past six months, rent free, and lords of all they surveyed from the rear window, which view comprised nothing but the marsh aforesaid, and a contracted glimpse of the ocean between a break in the line of cliffs. The house stood about one hundred yards from the railroad bridge, and out of sight from any other habitation.

The boys could see it from the center of the bridge, where they had paused, each with a bundle of groceries and other food under their arms, to gaze at the odd-looking sailor who was coming toward them. He had staggered upon the foot-path, and after blinking around him in the fast-fading light, he started to cross the bridge. At that moment a locomotive, pulling a heavy train at a fast clip, came humming around the curve beyond the bridge. The headlight threw its white glare down the rails, and full upon the bridge, and the engineer saw Jack in the act of raising the intoxicated seaman from the track. With an exclamation he seized the reverse lever.

"Whistle down brakes!" he shouted hoarsely to his fireman. "Two people on the track on the bridge."

A succession of wild shrieks startled the evening air, and the sudden jarring and bumping of the cars together, threw the passengers against one another as the air brakes seized the wheels and ground against them. A panic ran through the train as it glided forward with the ponderous driving wheels revolving backward in a vain effort to stop its momentum entirely. The fireman had turned on the sand to help things, but it was out of the question to stop the train before at least a part of it had crossed the bridge. But Jack's activity averted a catastrophe in which his pluck might have involved himself. He pulled the sailor clear just as the locomotive shot past the spot. In a few minutes it had disappeared in the direction of the village. The escape the sailor had had of his life appeared to have sobered him somewhat, and he recognized Jack as his preserver.

"Blow me, my hearty, you've done me a good turn, and Bill Brandon ain't the chap to forget an obligation, d'ye understand?"

"You're welcome," said Jack. "So your name is William Brandon?"

"Bill Brandon, shipmate. Now, what's yours?"

"Jack Draper. You're a stranger in this neighborhood."

"I've been here before—eight year ago."

"That so? What's bringing you out this way so late? Out of your reckoning?"

"Not a bit of it, my hearty. I'm steerin' straight for the house of my old shipmate, Dan Tucker, who lives in the little house on the edge of the marsh."

"The little house on the edge of the marsh!" exclaimed Jack, in surprise. "Why, your friend doesn't live there"

"Eh! Dan doesn't live there? What's become of him?"

"I couldn't tell you. I never heard of him."

"Never heard of Dan Tucker?"

"No."

"How long have you been 'round here?"

"Six months."

"Who's livin' in the little house now? I reckon he'll know somethin' about Dan."

"My friend here, and myself."

"What! You two?"

"Yes. We found the house deserted and we took possession of it. Perhaps you'll accompany us there and have a bite with us. We're bound home from work."

"I reckon I will, shipmate, for I feel kind of done up, and it might not be good for me to go back to the village. I'll allow that it looks like Dan has slipped his cable for Fiddlers' Green."

"Where is that?"

"Where's what?"

"Fiddlers' Green. I never heard of the place."

"Never heard of it, eh? That's the port of missin' ships. Once a chap drops anchor there that's the last of him. He's signed his last articles. He's dead."

"Oh, I see," said Jack. "He's gone aloft for good."

"Right you are, my hearty."

The boys took the mariner to the house and told him to make himself at home. This he proceeded to do by pulling out a dirty pipe, filling it with tobacco and commencing to smoke. While Bill peeled some potatoes, Jack started the fire and put the small kettle on to boil. By the time Bill had the potatoes peeled and sliced his housemate was making a pot of coffee. A mess of bacon and eggs for three, with fried potatoes, was prepared by Jack while Bill set the table. The sailor watched the busy lads, but said not a word until the meal was ready and he was invited to draw up his chair.

"I'll allow, my hearties, that the smell of that there food makes me kind of peckish, and I'm obliged to you for the invitation to shove my legs under your table. I'd rather eat here than shape my course for a village eatin'-house for reasons which maybe I'll tell you by and by."

Bill Brandon had a good appetite, as also had the boys, after their day of toil, so there were few scraps left when the meal was over. After the dishes were put away they took stools out-doors.

CHAPTER II.—The Sailor's Yarn.

"I suppose you intended to stay here all night if you had found your friend, Dan Tucker?" said Jack to their visitor.

"I'll allow such was the way I figgered," admitted the sailor.

"You're welcome to stay here, if you'll put up with a blanket and a bunch of straw in the attic. We've only two small cots, and Bill and me sleep in them," said Jack.

"Thank ye for the invite. I reckon I'll accept. Any port in a storm, is my motto."

"All right, Mr. Brandon; then that point is settled."

"A vast, my hearty! Don't put no handle to

my name. I ain't used to it. Call me Bill. That's what I answer to, and nobody calls me anythin' else."

"All right, but my friend here is named Bill, too."

"What's the diff'rence?" said the sailor. "There's a lot of Bills in the world."

"I suppose it's a good deal of a disappointment to you not to find your old friend, Dan Tucker."

"I'll allow it is. I had a particular reason for wantin' to see Dan."

"How long is it since you last saw him?"

"About eight year. He and me used to sail together years ago before he caught the rheumatiz so bad he had to lay up ashore."

"Then you were old shipmates," said Jack.

The sailor nodded and expectorated into a near-by bush.

"We always hung together when we were discharged at the end of a v'yage, and when our coin ran short we made it a p'int to sign aboard the same hooker for a new one. I would not have gone to sea without Dan if I could have helped it, but the time came when I had to, and I felt like a fish out of water for a while. Dan's uncle owned this house, and the marsh, too, so Dan said. When he couldn't go to sea no more his uncle let him live here; that's how Dan came to anchor outside the village. I stayed with him a month or two and then I concluded it was time for me to make another trip, for I hadn't a shot left in my locker, which you understand means that I was flat broke."

"So you shipped again," said Jack.

"I did. I didn't want to make a long v'yage no more, so when I got to Boston I looked around for some hooker bound for Rio or Buenos Ayres, in South America."

"And you found one, I suppose?"

"That's where you're wrong, my hearty. I would have found one if I had had half a chance; but, you see, I made the acquaintance of one of them blamed landsharks that hang around the wharves. He was sich a smooth chap for slingin' a yarn that I kind of cottoned to him. What was the result? He took me to his boardin'-house. There I was hocussed with drugged licker, and when I woke up I found I had been shanghaied aboard a craft bound 'round the Horn for 'Frisco."

"That was a fierce deal," said Bill Nye.

"Oh, well, what kin you do when you're fool enough to fall to the game? From 'Frisco the vessel went to China, and from China to Calcutta, and from Calcutta to London. I was pretty well used to her by that time, though the skipper and mates warn't angels, by a long shot. However, I calculated we'd return to Boston straight away, and as I had considerable wages due me, I was figgerin' on havin' a swell time with Dan for six months at least."

"Didn't you get back to Boston?" asked Jack.

"Not on that vessel, I didn't. She got a Bombay charter instead of one for the States, and back we all went to the Injies—me a-kickin' like a steer; but it didn't do no good."

"But why did you sign for the voyage if you didn't want to make it?"

"I didn't sign. I was shanghaied again."

"What! Twice on the same vessel?"

"Ay, ay, my hearty. They done me up brown."

"And so you went to Bombay?"

"I did, and afterward to the Cape."

"What cape?"

"Of Good Hope. Cape Town, in South Africa. And from there we sailed for New York."

"Where you arrived in due time."

"That's where you're wrong, matey. I didn't."

"What prevented you, if the ship was bound there?"

"A tremenjous gale which drove the vessel ashore in the mouth of the Amazon."

"In Brazil?"

"Prezactly."

"Was the vessel lost?"

"Not a timber was left of her."

"Then I suppose some of the people on board were lost?"

"They were all lost 'ceptin' me."

"Gee! You were lucky," said Nye.

"Maybe I was; but you see I was taken prisoner by a band of natives, carried a long way up the river, and compelled to work like a mule in the fields for five year. At last I made my escape, reached the coast, found my way to Georgetown, shipped on a schooner to Kingston, Jamaica, and reached Boston two days ago."

"Broke, I suppose," said Jack.

"Flat, but holdin' the key to a treasure that would make me a rich chap if I could get my flukes on it."

"A treasure!" exclaimed both the boys in a breath.

"Prezactly. The treasure of the cataract."

"What cataract?" asked Jack.

"Of the Amazon River."

"What does the treasure consist of—money?"

"Money, jewels, and sich like," nodded the mariner.

"And you discovered it?"

"No, I didn't. I said I held the key to where it's hidden."

"You mean somebody told you where it was hidden?"

"I'll allow somebody did, and he gave me a chart which p'int's out the exact place where it is."

"Why didn't this party secure the treasure for himself instead of putting you on to it?"

"For the best of reasons, my hearty; because he couldn't."

"Why couldn't he, if he had a chart showing where it was?"

"Because he hadn't an hour's life in him when I came across him."

"He was dying, then?"

"So fast you could see him slippin' his cable by inches."

"Where did you meet him, and under what circumstances?"

"In Cayenne, French Guiana. I was in a dram shop on the water front on the night I got there, after comin' up the coast on a sloop. There was a rumpus in the street and some one cried 'Murder.' I rushed out in time to see a man tryin' to defend himself against three rascals with knives. With a yell, I rushed to help him. The scoundrels scattered and fled, but the chap had been cut so badly he fell in a heap in the street. He knew he was done for and wouldn't let me move him to the dram-shop and send for a doctor. He said it warn't no use, and it warn't. Afore he

died he handed me the chart, which he said was the cause of his slippin' his cable, told me about the treasure, and warned me to look out for the three men who had attacked him, who, he said, were after the chart."

"Were they?"

"They were, my hearty, as I had reason to know afore I left Cayenne."

"Did they suspect you had got possession of it and try to get it from you?"

"They knew I had it."

"And they attacked you?"

"No, for I didn't give 'em the chance, but they kept me in sight, and when I found a berth aboard a schooner bound for Georgetown, they followed me."

"How did you escape them?"

"I accidentally saw 'em in a wine-shop, know'd what I might expect, and kept my weather-eye liftin' for squalls. In that way I disapp'inted 'em; but"—and the sailor's voice dropped to a whisper—"one of 'em followed me to Kingston, and I saw him in Boston the day I got there. He's after me, and now that my old messmate has slipped his moorin's, I ain't sure but he'll get me—and the chart, too."

"You've got the chart with you, I suppose?"

"I don't know any place safer for it than——"

At that moment Bill Nye sprang from his seat, jumped for the corner of the house, and vanished around it, greatly to Jack's surprise. In a few moments he returned.

"What was the matter, Bill?" asked his chum.

"I saw the figure of a man standing at the corner of the building listening to us," he said. "I tried to get him, but he gave me the slip in the darkness."

The sailor uttered a deep imprecation.

"It's the chap who followed me from Georgetown," he said.

CHAPTER III.—The Man in the House.

"What makes you think it is?" asked Jack. "More likely it was a tramp who was piping us off, and perhaps figuring on a touch."

"No, it warn't no hobo," said the sailor, shaking his head positively. "It was the rascal who is on my track. He's stickin' to me as close 'as tar. He's bound to get that there chart if he kin."

"What kind of looking fellow is he?"

"He's a foreigner. His skin is as dark as one of the natives in the tropics, and he's got whiskers to burn on his face. Then his eye—it's a bad one. I dunno how I've managed to hold him off, but I reckon it's because I've slept with one eye open when I knew he was around."

"You say you saw him in Boston when you arrived there?"

"I did."

"How did he know you were going there?"

"Easy enough. He shadowed me all around Kingston, watchin' for a chance to do me up, and failin', he found out the craft I shipped in, and where she was bound for."

"Then he's pretty sure to hang around here expecting to overhaul you if you return to the village to-night?"

"Maybe that was his idea, but it ain't now."

He knows I won't stir a step from here now, at least not alone," said Brandon.

"Bill and me will stand by you," said Jack.

"Thanks, matey. I owe you one, anyway, for savin' my life, and if I kin repay you I will. If the three of us could start for South America and get the treasure of the cataract, I'd be willin' to give you and your messmate half of it."

The evening was spent talking about the treasure. Brandon showed them the chart, which represented a section of the Amazon river, drawn to a scale, from a certain village, the name of which was given, to the cataract where the treasure chest lay concealed by the waters of the falls. The spot where it rested was marked by a small square, and its distance from the bank given in feet. A tree and a huge rock were indicated as special landmarks that would guide the searcher to the right place. Jack suggested that a copy be made of the chart to guard against the loss of the original. The sailor agreed, and the boy reproduced the sketch as well as he could.

"The copy wouldn't be much good if those rascals got the chart into their hands, for they would lose no time in securing the treasure," said Bill Nye.

"Very likely," replied his chum, "but still, it's just as well to have two strings to one's bow, since the chart might be lost without falling into their hands."

Before retiring the door was barricaded, but the night passed without any alarm. The following day was Saturday and pay-day. When the boys went to the office for their money they were told that their services would not be required any more until the next spring. They were somewhat surprised, for they had not expected to be laid off so soon. They met the sailor at the general store, where they made some more purchases, and found him the popular personage of the bunch of loungers who daily congregated in front of Jones's store to swap experiences, and talk politics. On their way home Jack told the sailor that they had been laid off at the canning establishment, and must look for other work in the neighborhood, unless Brandon could show them the way of reaching the Amazon River without calling for the expenditure of much money.

"Well, my hearties, there ain't no easier way than to ship afore the mast in some hooker that's bound for Georgetown, Paramaribo or Cayenne. They're all pretty close together, so it don't make much difference which of them ports we get to."

"Which is the nearest to the Amazon River?" asked Jack.

"Cayenne is. That's the chief port in French Guiana."

"How far is it from the Amazon?"

"I dunno prezactly, but I should think about 400 miles."

"Suppose we reach Cayenne, or either of the other places; how do we get to the river?"

"There are small tradin' fore-and-afters that sail between the towns near the mouth of the river and other places up and down the coast. After makin' my escape from the natives far up the river, some 500 miles west of where the cataract is, I reached the town of Macapa, near the mouth of the Amazon. After hangin' 'round

there a week, I found a craft that was bound for Cayenne and shipped in her, and from Cayenne I went to Georgetown in another vessel, as I told you afore. There won't be no trouble gettin' to Macapa once we reach the Guianas, and Macapa is the best place for us to start up the river from. The chart shows that Serpa is the nearest town to the cataract, and the distance given is 25 miles east. We can hire some small sloop at Macapa and sail straight to the cataract. We'll need to take along a month's grub, for it's a long distance from Macapa to Serpa."

"Bill and I will have to figure up whether we've got money enough to do all that," said Jack.

"It won't take a whole lot, my hearties," said the sailor. "If you kin scrape up \$50 between you, we'll make it do, for there's a fortune at the other end as big as the whale that swallowed Ben Higgins."

"Oh, we've got more'n \$50—nearer \$100," said Jack.

"Then we're all right, shipmate," said the sailor, slapping Jack on the back.

They soon reached the house and supper was presently under way. After the meal was over the mariner got out his pipe and began to smoke as usual, then he pulled a flask of gin out of his pocket and treated himself to a drink.

"Have some, shipmates?" he said.

"No, we never drink spirituous liquor," said Jack.

"Maybe you're right to steer clear of it, for you're only boys and it might stop you from growing," he grinned, helping himself to another swig and smacking his lips over it.

"When did you start drinking, Brandon?" said Jack.

"When? Long afore I kin remember. Why, I was weaned on gin!"

"Get out; what are you giving us?" put in Bill Nye.

"The truth, my hearty," said the sailor, helping himself to another dram. Nye uttered a snort and walked outside, where he was presently joined by Jack. It was not long before they heard the sailor piping up his vocal organs inside.

"The dead men sat on the carpenter's chest. Sing ho, and a bottle of rum."

"Gee! He's drunk again," said Bill Nye.

"Davy Jones and the shark had got the——"

Then the sailor uttered an awful yell, followed by "Murder!"

"What in creation is the matter with him?" cried Jack, as the boys sprang on their feet and looked in at the door.

They were staggered by what they saw. A short, wiry, dark-skinned and bearded man had Brandon by the throat and was struggling to tear the treasure chart out of his hands, but drunk as the mariner was, he clung on to it like grim death and yelled for help.

CHAPTER IV.—A Strenuous Time.

"Hi, there, you scoundrel, what are you up to?" cried Jack, jumping to the rescue, followed by Bill Nye.

The rascal gave a final tug, tore the paper out of the sailor's hands, and drawing an ugly-look-

ing knife, made a dash at the boys, who stood between him and the doorway.

"Out of my way!" he hissed, lunging at Jack.

The boys instinctively drew back, leaving the road clear for the man. As the fellow darted for the door Bill Nye put out his foot and the rascal tripped over it, pitching headlong outside and dropping his knife in the effort to save himself. Jack saw his chance and springing after the scoundrel, leaped on his back and held him down. But the fellow was as lithe as a panther. He upset Jack and was wriggling himself free when Bill Nye came up and hit him a staggering blow under the ear that sent him rolling on the ground. Both of the boys seized him and dragged him into the house, closing the door. They got the chart away from him and let him get up. He regarded them with sullen fury, as he stood in a crouching attitude near the table.

"By gar! I feex you for dees!" he hissed, his snaky-looking eyes spitting fire.

"I think it's more likely that we'll fix you, you rascal," said Jack. "We were witnesses of your assault upon that sailor, for which you can be arrested and punished by the village magistrate, even if he does not consider it serious enough to hold you for a regular trial at the county town. Besides, you tried to steal that chart, which belongs to the sailor. I guess you've put your foot in it this time."

"Comment! You say ze chart to ze sailor belongs? Eet ees von grand lie!" cried the intruder, in an excited tone. "He stole ze chart from ze man what own heem, and I come two, t'ree t'ousan' mile to get heem back."

"Aw, tell that to the marines," said Bill Nye.

"Saere! Tell ze marines nossing. I want ze chart! Comprennez vous? You give heem up, I go my way."

"You'll have to take it out in wanting," said Jack. "You've got an awful nerve to ask for it."

"You mean to keep heem?"

"Yes, we're going to keep it, and you're going to the lockup. Get a piece of rope, Bill, so we can tie his arms behind him."

Jack picked up the knife which had been dropped by the intruder. It was a nasty-looking weapon, with a blade, thin and sharp, a foot long.

"Non, you s'all not tie me. I will fight to ze last."

The rascal looked dangerous even without a weapon, and Jack knew that they would have a lot of trouble in securing him, for he was lithe and as active as a wild cat. Bill Nye walked to a corner of the room and took down a stout piece of line that hung from a nail, the Frenchman watching him out of the corner of his eye.

"So you're going to put up a fight, are you?" said Jack, stepping up to the table.

The intruder made no reply, but seemed to be preparing himself for the struggle that he looked for. Jack pulled out the drawer and laid his hand on a revolver he had placed there. This he pointed at the Frenchman.

"Put your hands behind your back!" ordered Jack, as Bill Nye approached the rascal on the other side of the table.

The Frenchman obeyed reluctantly, as if yielding with very bad grace. Bill started to tie him. Quick as a flash the Frenchman grabbed him and with a strength that surprised Nye swung him

around so that his body came between him and the pointed revolver. Then, before the discomfited Jack could make a move, he shoved Bill against the table, causing it to tip. The lamp fell with a crash and rolled into the sailor's lap. The hot chimney burned one of Brandon's hairy hands and he staggered up with a howl of pain, which action caused the lamp to drop on the floor and go out. The room was instantly enveloped in darkness. The Frenchman proceeded to take advantage of that fact and the confusion his action had caused. He glided toward the door, intending to make his exit. Here Jack's presence of mind came into play. Pointing the revolver toward the side wall, he pulled the trigger. He surmised what the Frenchman would do, and he knew that the flash of the weapon would show him the position of the rascal. It did, but the shot bore unexpected fruit. At the moment Jack fired the intruder was in line with the revolver. The result was, the bullet clipped his skull and he fell stunned to the floor.

"Get a match, Bill," said Jack; "I'm afraid I've accidentally killed the rascal. I didn't suspect that he was in line with my gun."

Bill Nye groped his way to the shelf, where they kept the match-box, struck a lucifer, and lighted a small piece of candle. The light revealed the sailor nursing his injured hand and swearing in choice terms, near the door. It also showed the motionless form of the Frenchman, stretched out on the floor, bleeding from a red furrow on the side of his head.

"Hold the light, Bill, till I see if he's dead," said Jack. "It's fierce to kill a man, even accidentally. This is a bad night's work."

Jack knelt beside the motionless and bleeding Frenchman and looked at him. Then he felt of the man's heart. It was beating all right.

"He's not dead. His heart is beating quite strongly. I guess the bullet only stunned him. I'm mighty glad he isn't. It might put a spoke in our plans about the treasure. Get some water and a towel, and I'll patch him up," said Jack.

Jack washed the blood from the Frenchman's wound, but it continued to bleed quite freely. The only thing he could do was to bind the fellow's head up with the towel. Then, as a precautionary measure, in case the man should play 'possum on them when he recovered his senses, Jack tied his ankles together.

"Where's Brandon?" he asked, looking around and not seeing the sailor.

"Blessed if I know," replied Bill, also looking around.

They looked for him, and found the sailor stretched out on Nye's cot, asleep and snoring.

"He's good for all night," said Jack.

"Well, he won't stay in my cot all night if I know it," said Bill. "Give me a hand, and we'll carry him into the next room and let him sleep it out on the floor."

The boys grabbed the drunken marine and pulled him into the living-room. He woke up partially, and wanted to fight, but fell asleep again as soon as they dropped him in a corner.

"What shall we do with the Frenchman?" asked Bill. "We can't keep him in here all night, and the constable's house is more than a mile away."

"When he recovers his senses we'll take him outside and tie him to a tree."

"Why not do it before he recovers, and then we'll have less trouble with him?"

"All right, we'll do that," said Jack. "Pick up that piece of line, and then we'll pick up our prisoner."

In a very short time they had the Frenchman tied in a sitting position to the tree, and there they left him, intending to turn him over to the village constable in the morning and charge him with assault and robbery. As the door was broken, they had to barricade it as before, and then they went to bed. The boys always slept late on Sunday morning. When Jack woke up and saw the sunlight shining between the boards that protected the windows, his first thought was for the prisoner. He hurriedly dressed himself, pulled the brace from the door, opened it, and looked out. He was surprised to find their prisoner gone.

CHAPTER V.—In the Sailor's Grasp.

"Say, Bill!" cried Jack.

"Hello," returned his chum, from the inner room.

"The prisoner has escaped."

"The dickens he has!" exclaimed Bill.

"Yes, he's gone. I don't see how he got away, for we tied him securely."

"He's the slipperiest chap I ever came across," said Bill, coming out.

They walked over to the tree and found the line which had bound the Frenchman lying in a heap on the ground. It had been cut by a knife.

"Say, maybe some boys on their way to the beach saw him tied up here, came over and set him free," said Bill, as the idea occurred to him.

"That's so. I didn't think of that. No doubt he gave them some kind of a yarn to account for his situation, and they believed him," said Jack.

The boys subsequently learned that such was the case. The sailor didn't wake up for some hours afterward, and then Jack cooked him something to eat. He had a confused idea that something had happened the night before, and was rather surprised at the story that Jack told him.

"Here's your chart," said the boy. "The rascal got it away from you, for you were too drunk to offer much of a resistance. That fellow is a regular eel. He almost got away from both of us, but we finally landed him."

"What did you do with him, shipmate?"

Jack told him that they had tied him to a tree outside, but he was not there when he looked out, after getting up. The boys completed their preparations for leaving the neighborhood during the day, for having decided to make the trip to the Amazon, it was only a waste of time to delay their departure. Believing that the Frenchman was keeping close tab on Brandon's movements, Jack wondered how they could get away from Ringbolt without his knowledge. A local train for Portsmouth, N. H., making connection with the Boston and Portland night express, stopped at the Ringbolt station at half-past eight on Sunday night. They told the sailor their plan for leaving.

"All right, my hearty," said Brandon. "We'll do it."

When the time came for them to start out, the boys reconnoitered the immediate neighborhood to see if the Frenchman was lurking around, and seeing no signs of him, they nailed up the door, and with their grips in their hands, the sailor not being embarrassed with any baggage, they started for the station along the edge of the salt marsh. The path they followed was a lonesome one, and they were not likely to meet anybody along it. They reached a road that led in one direction to the farming district, and in the other to the station. It wanted only ten minutes of train time when they reached the station without incident. Jack bought three tickets through to Boston, and they sat down in the waiting-room and found themselves apparently the only passengers who were going to take the train that evening.

"Here comes the train. Let's get out on the platform," said Jack shortly.

He and Bill Nye grabbed their grips and started for the door. As they passed outside, a face that had been watching them through a back window disappeared, and through a near-by door the Frenchman, looking more villainous than ever, with his head bound up with a cloth, glided into the waiting-room. He went up to the ticket window.

"I takes ze one tickeet for Bos-ton, monsieur."

The agent stamped the ticket and handed it out to the foreigner, with the change coming to him out of a ten-dollar bill.

"Ze ozaire trois passenaire zey also take ze tickeet for Bos-ton—oui?" he said, like a person who was certain of the fact.

The agent stared at the Frenchman.

"If you're going to take that train, you'd better get a move on," he said.

The rascal saw he had no time to lose, so after making a grimace at the agent, expressive of disgust, he started for the platform, and boarded the car behind that taken by the sailor and the boys. Soon after the train reached Portsmouth the express from Portland came in and picked up the few persons waiting for it at that late hour. It was made up largely of sleepers, with only one day-coach and a smoker. The boys and their companion got into the day coach and the Frenchman sneaked into the smoking-car. The train was half an hour on its way to Boston when Bill Brandon entered the smoker, sank into the first vacant seat he came to, pulled out, filled and lighted his pipe, and settled himself to enjoy a smoke. He pulled out his whisky flask, saw there were a couple of drinks in it, and helped himself to one. Ten minutes later he took the other drink and looked at the empty flask regretfully. At that moment the Frenchman came down the aisle to get a drink of water. He had not seen the sailor come into the car, and did not expect to meet him. Their eyes met, and Brandon was fairly staggered to find his enemy already on his trail, as though he had never lost it for a moment. With an imprecation he sprang on his feet and reached for the rascal. The Frenchman was quicker than he, and turned to retreat, but in doing so he slipped and fell. Brandon laid hold of his leg with a powerful grip.

"Now I've got you, you son of a sea cook, and

"I'm going to fix you for keeps," he said, in a tone that meant business.

He dragged the foreigner out onto the platform of the car.

"Say your prayers, you piratical lubber, for you ain't got more'n a minute to live!" cried the sailor, shaking the Frenchman as a terrier might a good-sized rat. "I'm goin' to chuck you overboard from this here train."

The dark-skinned man struggled and squirmed, but he was like a child in the grasp of the sailor, who was fully determined to be rid of his pursuer forever. At that moment the door of the smoker opened, and the conductor came out with his lantern in his hand. He saw the two struggling figures in the dark halfway down the steps of the car.

"Hello, what is this?" he cried, flashing the light on them.

"Help!" screamed the Frenchman.

The door of the day coach opened and Jack came out. He was going forward to see what was keeping the sailor. The flashing of the lantern showed him the faces of the two men, whom he at once recognized as Bill Brandon and the Frenchman. The sight of the foreigner fairly took his breath, for he was the last person he expected to see on the train, since he had been confident that they had eluded the fellow in leaving Ringbolt. The conductor seized the iron rail and leaned down to lay hold of Brandon. At the moment the train, which was running at a high rate of speed, to make up a few minutes' lost time, swung around a curve and darted across a culvert spanning a creek. Brandon and his intended victim were flung against the side of the railing and then pitched headlong out into the darkness.

"Good Lord!" exclaimed the conductor, "they're off."

He made a spring for the signal line connecting with the engine and pulled it. A moment later came the whistle of "down brakes," and the speed of the train was checked.

CHAPTER VI.—On the Way to the Amazon.

The whole thing had happened so quickly that Jack had barely recognized the sailor and the Frenchman when they vanished into the darkness.

"My gracious!" he ejaculated, as soon as he got his breath, looking at the conductor, "do you think they stand any chance of escaping with their lives?"

"Not one in a hundred," was the reply.

"You have stopped the train."

"Yes."

"And you're going back to find out what has become of them."

"Yes," replied the conductor, passing into the smoker and hurrying forward to the baggage car.

Jack went into the day coach, aroused Bill Nye, who was asleep, and told him what had happened. Bill was paralyzed by the news. Both boys went on the platform as the train backed toward the culvert at a slow pace. When it nearly reached that point it came to a stop. The conductor and several train hands jumped off,

with lanterns, to look for the bodies of the men, for nobody expected to find either alive. The boys jumped off, too, and joined one of the train men. The sailor was found about a hundred yards west of the creek, near a thick bunch of bushes. He was quite dead, and was carried into the baggage car. The Frenchman was not to be found anywhere. It didn't seem possible that he could have escaped, and yet such must have been the case, else his body would have lain somewhere close to the sailor's. The conductor and his men marvelled much at his disappearance. Even had he escaped with his life, he ought to be there somewhere. But he wasn't, though a thorough search of the immediate vicinity was made. At last the conductor ordered the engineer to proceed, and the train went on.

The boys were allowed to finish the trip in the baggage car, as the sailor was their companion.

"You'd better get hold of that chart, Jack," said Bill Nye, as they sat watching the corpse. "When he's sent to the morgue in Boston everything will be taken out of his pockets, and then you may not be able to get it."

So Jack bent down and searched the inside pocket of Brandon's jacket, where he knew the sailor carried the paper. The chart was not in it, nor was it in any of his other pockets. It was gone.

"He hasn't got the chart, you say?" said Bill. "Why, where could it have gone?"

"I couldn't tell you, though I strongly suspect that the Frenchman landed in the bushes and thus saved his life. He then looked around for Brandon, found his body, and stole the chart, thus at last accomplishing his purpose," said Jack.

"It looks as though you are right," said Bill. "Well, I suppose we'll have to give up the treasure."

"Not at all. We have a facsimile copy of the chart, which is as good as the original. Since Brandon is out of it we'll make the search ourselves."

"Then you mean to go to the Amazon River?"

"I do."

"But if the Frenchman really did escape, and has secured the chart, he and his friends are sure to get ahead of us."

"They may and they may not. At any rate the game is worth the risk. Having made up my mind to go after the treasure, I don't intend to back out, and I hope you won't, either, for I wouldn't care to go without you."

"Oh, I'll go wherever you will," said Bill.

"That's right. If we get that treasure, we'll be fixed for life."

"It's a pretty long shot, though."

"Americans are accustomed to take long shots when there's big money in it."

"I suppose we'll follow our prearranged plan of shipping for Georgetown, or one of the other two ports in the Guianas?"

"Sure. We haven't the funds to go there by a steamer. We'll make something in wages which will give us a further lift, for we'll probably need all the coin we can rake together."

"Our American money won't pass current down there. We'll have to change it in Boston."

"I'll look after that. While hunting for a

vessel to ship on we can make all necessary inquiries."

"The conductor says we'll reach Boston about seven."

"That's a good time to get there. We'll look up a cheap lodging-house and then attend to business."

"Who'd have thought Brandon would have been killed to-night?" said Bill. "It seems only a few minutes ago he was talking to us in the car."

"But who'd have thought that rascally Frenchman was on his trail in spite of all our precautions in trying to give him the slip?"

"He seems to be cuter than greased lightning. If he really escaped after that awful tumble from the train, I shall think him almost more than human."

"Astonishing things do happen in the world. We read about them every day almost in the papers. I remember, for instance, of a man who climbed the famous Matterhorn mountain, a stunt that did up scores of other ambitious people. He came off with flying colors, and became celebrated all over the world for the feat. Well, years afterward, when at home, he slipped off the stoop of his house and broke his neck, though he fell only a few feet. What do you think of that for curious luck? When he went up the mountain, he had a dozen narrow escapes of falling 3,000 or more feet, but he didn't. There's Steeple Jack, in New York, who takes all sorts of climbing chances, and hasn't met with an accident yet. I guess he's the only man they can find who will undertake the work of painting the flag-poles at dizzy heights. I'll bet he'll never fall doing it, but some day he may walk into a coal hole in the sidewalk or fall off a street car, and be carried to a hospital."

The train reached Boston thirty minutes late, and the boys, provided with the address of a cheap lodging-house, they got from a train hand, left the depot. Putting up at the place, they went out to a cheap restaurant, and after the meal, started for the docks, not far away, to see what their chances were of working their way to South America. After considerable investigation, they learned that the best chance of reaching the Guianas was to ship to the West Indies first. They found a large schooner at one of the wharves, which was unloading a cargo of fruit. She had come from Kingston, in Jamaica, and was going back there again with a cargo of American staples and machinery. They applied to the mate, who sent them to interview the captain. Jack gave him a yarn about the necessity of their working their way to Georgetown, and he agreed to take them to Kingston if they would ask no wages. The boys consented to the arrangement, and were told to report on board three days later. They were quite tickled at having accomplished a part of their purpose, and spent the interval in making final preparations for the trip to the Amazon.

At the proper time they appeared at the schooner with two canvas bags containing their possessions and were shown to the fore-castle and allotted berths. They donned rough suits and announced their readiness to turn in and work. A few hours later the schooner sailed for the tropics. Of course the boys, not being used to

life on the water, got seasick as soon as the craft ran into rough weather, but they soon recovered, performed all the duty required of them, and finally landed with their property at Kingston. They went to a lodging place with a friendly sailor who had been one of their companions on board the schooner, and that very day shipped as ordinary seamen, at regular wages, for Cayenne, French Guiana.

"We're lucky," said Bill, as soon as Jack had made the arrangement with the skipper of the weather-beaten vessel they were to sail in.

"That's right, we are," admitted his chum. "If our luck holds, we'll soon see the Amazon."

As the vessel was to sail at daylight next morning they went on board at once. They were put to work aloft scraping one of the yards. Sitting astride of the pole and facing one another, they sweated under the heat of the declining tropical sun.

"Geel! this takes the starch out of a chap," said Bill, wiping his face with his shirt sleeve.

"I guess we'll find it hotter on the Amazon," said Jack.

"But we won't have to work under it. We're going to sail up the river in our own craft, if we can hire one cheap enough for a month's cruise."

"I guess we won't have any trouble about that. We only want a small sailboat—one large enough to carry our traps, sufficient food, and the windlass that we figured out we should need for hoisting the treasure chest out of the water."

They scraped away till they had almost finished their task when Bill, happening to look down, uttered an exclamation.

"What's the matter?" asked Jack.

"Look and see who's on deck," said Bill.

Jack looked and uttered an exclamation, too. Talking to the captain was the rascally Frenchman who had followed Bill Brandon to his death.

CHAPTER VII.—The Boys Take up a Mule Train.

"The rascal is trying to get a berth aboard this vessel, I guess," said Jack. "It will be kind of tough if we have to sail with him. He'll recognize us the moment he meets us, and he'll suspect at once what has brought us down here. Then when we go ashore at Cayenne he'll watch us as close as he did the sailor, and there is no telling what the result will be."

"The captain is shaking his head," said Bill. "That means he doesn't want the fellow's services."

In a few minutes the Frenchman went ashore, and the boys saw him go aboard a craft on the other side of the wharf. Before he reappeared they finished the job of scraping the foreyard, and descended to the deck. There was nothing more for them to do, or at least they were not put at anything else for it was near supper time, so they lounged about on the fore-castle until they were called to get their grub. About the time they finished it night descended on the scene with tropical suddenness, and they retired to the fore-castle to turn in, as they expected to be routed out to duty at four o'clock next morning. When breakfast was served next morning the vessel

was several miles away from Jamaica, headed East by south across the Caribbean Sea. The trip to Cayenne was made under favorable conditions and the boys were not overworked.

The other members of the crew, who were mostly French and used that language among themselves, were well acquainted with Cayenne, and the boys, who had made themselves popular aboard, notwithstanding that they could not speak French, picked up a good deal of information of the place they were going to. When the vessel made fast to her wharf, the boys were paid off and discharged. The rest of the crew were paid off, too, for the craft belonged to Cayenne. Jack and Bill took their bags to the same lodging-house the crew went to, but they didn't intend to stay in the town any longer than they could help, for they knew the French rascal would soon manage to get there, and they had no wish to run foul of him. Having told their shipmate that their objective point was the town of Macapa on the Delta of the Amazon River, one of them went with them along the water front to see if any craft was about sailing for that port. They found two small schooners that were going there, but the skippers had no need of any more hands, so they were disappointed in their expectations.

That evening they learned that a mule convoy was about to leave Cayenne for Macapa overland, a distance of about 500 miles, and the owner was looking for some hands to make the trip with him.

"How would you like to go that way?" Jack asked Bill.

"I don't know how I'd like it until I had some experience, but if the man will pay us a fair price and feed us decently, I'd just as soon try it as not. I'm sick of the water, anyway," said Bill.

"I think it's a good chance, for if we wait for a chance to ship in a small craft we may have to wait some time," said Jack.

"Why don't you call on the man and see what you can do with him. I'll go with you."

"All right. I'll speak to the landlord of this house. He talks English as well as French and Spanish. He will be able to tell me where I can find the man."

Jack hunted up the landlord and secured the desired information from him. Then the two boys started out to see the party. His headquarters was at a depot of supplies on the main street. He was a dark-skinned Frenchman, and his name was Pierre Briquet. He could speak English first rate, and he received the boys politely. When they stated their errand he appeared to be delighted, for he had experienced considerable trouble in getting men to make the trip. He liked their appearance, saw that they were strong and hearty, and engaged them at a satisfactory compensation. He said it would take about a month to cover the distance, which was made at a leisurely but steady pace.

"When do you start?" asked Jack.

"At sunrise, the day after to-morrow. Bring your bags around to the depot some time to-morrow afternoon, and settle with the landlord of the place where you are stopping. You will sleep at the depot, so as to be ready to start out in the morning," said Briquet.

The matter being settled, the boys spent the rest of their stay in Cayenne looking around the

town, taking in what sights there were to be seen. They made the acquaintance with the rest of the limited party the night before they started. Briquet was to go along in charge, and besides Jack and Bill there were two natives of French Guiana, and a negro boy named Mose Johnson. Mose was tickled to death to meet the American boys for he hailed from the States himself, having been born in New Orleans. He could speak French, Spanish and English, and had been two years in South America. He told Jack that he had made the trip to Macapa and back several times, and knew the route like a book. The boys kind of cottoned to him, for even though he was a full-blooded negro he was a countryman of theirs, and there was a whole lot in that when one finds himself adrift like in a foreign land.

"By golly! Dis yere is a mighty big 'sprise to dis chile to make de 'quaintance of yo' two," said Mose, with a grin which split his mouth almost from ear to ear. "I done hope dat yo' will come back wif de train, too. De ole man 'll treat yo' well, an' golly, I'll do mos' anyting fo' yo'."

"We'll think it over," said Jack, who did not care to let on what business was taking him and Bill to Macapa. All hands had just finished supper at the depot when Briquet was called outside to see a visitor. In a few minutes he returned with a stranger. As the newcomer came within the circle of light the boys nearly had a fit. It was the French rascal they had hoped to lose in the shuffle. Briquet announced that the new man was going with the party.

"Gee! That settles it," whispered Bill to his chum.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Jack. "I'm not a whole lot afraid of him. At any rate, now that we're embarked in the treasure hunt I'm not going to give it up without a struggle, bet your life."

Jack spoke resolutely, and his attitude had its influence with Bill. The Frenchman was introduced as Antoine Boutelle. As he glanced around the room in a shifty way his gaze lighted on the two boys. He recognized them at once and his surprise was evident. He stared at them for a moment or two to make sure he had made no mistake, then he went right up to them with the utmost sangfroid.

"By gar, dees ees von grand surprise," he said, with a snaky look in his eyes. "Je suis ver' glad to meet you."

"Sorry I can't say the same, monsoo," replied Jack coolly.

"Non? Est-ce que vous allez a Macapa? (Are you going to Macapa)?"

"Say, I don't understand you. Why don't you talk English? You can do it after a fashion, at any rate," replied Jack.

The Frenchman grinned in a wicked way.

"No understand, eh? Quel dommage (what a pity)! You and your frien' go wif ze train in ze morning, oui?"

"Yes, we're going, all right."

The Frenchman did not understand what he meant by the words "all right," in the sense he used them, but he let it go.

"Ze las' time ve meet we haf what you Americans call ze rough house; but I bear you no bad

feeling. I shake han's wiz you. I haf nossing against you."

The Frenchman offered his hand and Jack took it as a matter of policy, not because he cared to make up with the rascal. Bill shook his hand too.

"You are ze fine boy, both of you. Ze sailor, vat you done wiz heem?"

"You ought to know what became of him," said Jack.

"Je (I)!" exclaimed the rascal, with affected surprise.

"Yes, you. Didn't he and you tumble off the Boston night express together?"

"I see you know ze fac's. Oui, ve took ze grand tumble. Dat was ze las' I see heem."

Jack felt like telling him that he lied, but he didn't.

"The sailor was killed. How did you escape?"

"He vas keeled, eh?" grinned the Frenchman, just as if he didn't know. "Eet serve heem right. I make my escape wiz what you call ze skeen of my teeth. I fall in ze bush and dat safe me. Now, my frien', you vill tell me vat beesness brings you to dees country."

"Oh, we just came here," said Jack.

The Frenchman looked puzzled.

"You just came here—vat you mean by dat?"

"We came to see the country."

"Oh, dat ees eet?" said the rascal, with a wicked look. "You vill see heem wiz dees train. Eet ees five hundred mile to Macapa, ovair ze plain and ze mountain, and through ze forest. Ah, oui, you vill see heem ver' much."

"I have no doubt but we will, monsoo. And now if it's all the same to you my friend and myself will bid you good-night, as the train starts at sunrise," said Jack, getting up.

The Frenchman looked after their retreating figures in no pleasant way.

"By gar! I wonder what brought those boys to Cayenne and why they were going to Macapa?" he asked himself in French. "Macapa is on the Amazon and the treasure of the cataract is several hundred miles up that river. The sailor probably told them all about it, and maybe they think they can find it. Poof! It is impossible without the chart, and that I have possession of. They will find it a wildgoose chase. What fools these American boys are to come so far for nothing."

He walked over to one of the native men, who was smoking his pipe near the door, and got into conversation with him. The boys had ceased to interest him.

CHAPTER VIII.—Treachery.

Two weeks later the mule train entered a thick forest one afternoon that lay for miles across the country, and toward the west partially climbed the spur of a great mountain range. The Briquet party was a little over halfway to Macapa. Jack and Bill had enjoyed the trip so far very much indeed. It was a new and interesting experience for them. They had as little as possible to do with the Frenchman, and he, on his part, made no effort to press his company on them. Mose Johnson, however, was their constant companion, and they found him a very

entertaining and friendly one. While the train was in motion, which it was most of the time between sunrise and sunset, excepting an interval of an hour at midday for dinner, the boys had very little communication, as they were many yards apart looking after half a dozen mules each.

In some cases the train followed a regular road, at others a beaten path, and occasionally a mere trail. Briquet took the most direct route that experience had pointed out to him in order to save time, that is why they left the road so often and cut across the country. When they entered the forest they followed a well-defined path that saved several miles. When the sun set they were in the midst of the woods, making haste to reach a clearing where they would camp for the night. The more important meal of the day was eaten when the mules had been tethered for the night, after having been relieved of their burdens. Then a fire was lighted, meat cooked and coffee prepared. With the setting of the sun the darkness of night fell upon the forest. The train was temporarily stopped while lanterns were lighted and then the mules were started on again. Jack, Bill and Mose, in the order named, bossed the last eighteen mules. Antoine Boutelle, the French rascal, directed the six ahead of Jack, and the boy followed his flickering lanterns in the darkness, though he could occasionally see the lantern of the native ahead of Boutelle, as it winked among the trees. Briquet, the boss of the outfit, drove the first six mules himself on this occasion, because he was short of help on this trip. Heretofore it had been his custom to devote his attention to overlooking the whole bunch, and taking things easy, as his position as owner entitled him to do. Usually Briquet escorted forty-eight loaded mules on his trips—there were but forty-two this time, which showed that he was two men short.

Briquet placed Mose in the rear because he put great dependence on the young negro, who was his most reliable assistant, and the longest in his employ. A delay soon after the train entered the forest, owing to something that went wrong with Boutelle's mules, was the cause of night overtaking the train some distance from the clearing, and Briquet's orders, sent down the line when the lanterns were lighted, was to use the best speed forward. After a while Jack saw only Boutelle's lanterns ahead. He supposed that the eighteen forward mules had gone on faster than the others and did not think anything about the matter. All he had to do anyway was to keep track of the first light ahead, just as it was Bill's business to keep his lantern in view, and Mose's to follow Bill's. The truth of the matter was that Boutelle had turned off designedly into a by-path, knowing that those behind him would follow. Although he had claimed to know nothing about the route the train followed from Cayenne to Macapa, alleging that he was a stranger to the country outside of the capital of French Guiana, the fact was he knew the whole district, and particularly the forest, much better even than Briquet himself.

His purpose in hiring out to the train owner was not an honest one. He had friends and confederates in the forest who were expecting him

to return from the States with the chart of the treasure of the cataract at any moment. Now one would have thought that the prospect of capturing the treasure would have prevented the tricky Frenchman from going into such a side issue as the theft of the goods borne by a portion of the mules of the train to which he had attached himself. The fact was, however, that it was Boutelle's nature to let nothing get by him. He saw the chance to get away with his own mules and the eighteen that were following on behind, and he did not hesitate to grasp the opportunity, though he knew that in doing so he was leading the two American boys and the young negro into a trap that was likely to cost them their lives. But what did he care for them? What was the life of a human being more than the life of any animal, in his estimation? Nothing. Dead boys tell no tales, neither do mules, be they alive or dead. So, as we have said, he turned off into a by-path with which he was familiar, and Jack naturally followed the flash of his lantern. Bill and Mose, of course, followed in their turn, and thus it came to pass that while the first eighteen mules pushed ahead toward the clearing where the camp was to be pitched for the night, the other twenty-four followed a course that was every moment putting a wider distance between the two sections.

Jack wondered how long it would take to reach the clearing. He was tired and hungry, and the same could be said of Bill and Mose. The colored lad, however, knew that the clearing ought to be reached soon. Having been over the route so often he was able to make a pretty close calculation of the distance, consequently when time passed and the mules continued to hustle ahead at the same speed, he began to feel puzzled. Then he began to notice that the ground was tending upward, which wasn't right, in his opinion.

"By golly, dar am somefin' wrong," he muttered. "We's shorely done got off'n de right track, which am berry funny kase Marse Briquet know de right way wif his eyes shut."

Mose would have liked to have gone forward to make an investigation, but he didn't dare leave his mules to themselves. He could see two twinkling lanterns ahead, and sometimes a third one, which was the one carried by Boutelle, and felt somewhat reassured, for all that it seemed to him that things were not just right. The first eighteen mules had already reached the clearing, and Briquet had discovered that the larger part of his train had got off the track somehow. He blamed himself now for not placing Boutelle immediately behind his own bunch, for remembering the professed ignorance of the Frenchman, he concluded that he had gone astray accidentally. He sent one of his men back to find the missing part of the train, expecting he would not have much trouble in locating it. But, as the reader will surmise, his effort was doomed to be in vain.

In the meantime, the rascally Frenchman continued to push ahead along the by-path, turning and twisting as it did up into the lower part of the mountain range. At length when Mose was all worked up over the situation, which had become decidedly unnatural to him, Boutelle made out a light shining ahead. With an ejaculation of satisfaction he lashed the mules into a tired

run, and after a few minutes halted them in front of a small story-and-a-half house that stood like a ghostly shadow in a little clearing not much larger than was necessary to accommodate it. Jack ran his mules up and halted them too. He supposed that this was the clearing they had been aiming for, and that Briquet and the other men were in the house, though from what he had understood there was no house at the clearing where they were going to pass the night. Bill next came up with his mules, and lastly followed Mose. It took but a glance for the colored boy to see that they were not at the right spot. Never before had he come across a house of any kind in the forest, therefore it stood to reason that the train was off its route. Boutelle was knocking at the door of the habitation. The boys looked around and saw no signs of the other mules.

"By golly, I wonder whar we's got to," said Mose.

"Why, isn't this the clearing where we are to stop for the night?" asked Jack.

"Nebber on yo' life it isn't," replied Mose. "I nebber seen this yere place afore."

"Then why did we come this way unless the boss has taken a new route?"

"Whar am de rest ob de mules? Dey ain't nowhar 'bout. I reckon dat de fac' am, dat Frenchman got off de track and fatched us out ob de way."

"Gee! That's tough!" put in Bill. "I s'pose we don't eat till we find our way to the right place."

At first no notice was taken of Boutelle's knock, but at length a window was opened a little way and a rough voice asked who was there. Boutelle said something in a low tone in French and the man at the window uttered an exclamation.

"You are back at last," he said in French.

"Oui, oui; open the door," returned Boutelle.

The window was slammed shut and presently the door was opened. The light from a lamp shining out showed the bunch of mules and the three boys as well as Boutelle himself.

"Ha! What is this?" cried the man, in his native tongue, looking suspiciously at the Frenchman. "You have companions with you."

Boutelle leaned forward and whispered in his ear. The other's frown relaxed into a grin.

"What a fellow you are, Boutelle!" he said.

"Hush, Cuchard; the negro boy understands French, and his suspicions must not be aroused. The other two lads are Americans, and are ignorant of the language. Where are Jaques and Claude?"

"Out hunting for a couple of rabbits for supper. They should be here any moment. Bring the boys inside."

"Madame Cuchard and Mariette are in good health, oui?"

Cuchard nodded. Jack, Bill and Mose stood back watching the interview between Boutelle and the man of the house. Mose could only catch a word now and then, but that was enough to tell him that the party who lived in the shanty was a Frenchman. Boutelle turned to the boys.

"Come," he said, in French, "enter."

"What did he say?" Jack asked Mose.

"He sayed dat we am to go in de house," replied Mose. "I reckon dat we ought'r turn 'round

and go back de way dat we came. De boss will done have a fit ef we don' turn up at de camp."

"How is it that we came here?" said Jack, stepping up to the Frenchman. "Did you miss the path somehow?"

"Oui. I mees heem in ze dark. I make myse'f all meex up in dees forest, since I nevaire been in dees part of ze countree before. Comprenez-vous?"

"Yes, I understand you, but I can't see how you did it, when you had Raymond's lantern ahead to guide you."

"Ray-mond, oui; but all at one time I no see heem. Ze light he carree deesappear all of ze sudden, like ze candle vat go out, poof! I look hard but I no see heem any more. I keep on believing dat I go quite right, but," with a shrug of his shoulders, "you see ve come out of ze way. Eet ees too bad, but I cannot help heem."

"How far out of the way have we come?"

"How far? Mais, dat ees vat you call ze tom fool question. We are more or less as ze case eet may be. Howevair eet make no mattaire. Ve vill put up at dees maison (house), and in ze morning ve finds ze vay to ze ozaire partee."

Jack and Bill had no objection to stopping at the house if they were assured of supper and a bed on the floor, but Mose was not of the same way of thinking. He stepped forward and put up an argument in French with Boutelle, insisting that they ought to retrace their steps. The Frenchman grew angry over his attitude and said flatly that they would not go back. Mose felt that he had more right to boss the outfit than the foreigner, and said so, whereupon Boutelle seized him roughly by the arm and shoved him into the house.

"You tie ze mule to ze tree and zen come in ze house," said the Frenchman to Jack and Bill. "Ve haf suppaire presentlee, and zen yous'll go to bed as soon as you wish."

With these words he turned on his heel and entered the house, leaving Jack and his chum to secure the bunch of mules.

CHAPTER IX.—Signs of Danger.

Fifteen minutes later Jack and Bill walked into the house. They found themselves in a fair-sized living-room, lighted in the daytime by two windows, but now illuminated by a lamp that stood on a shelf above an open fireplace where a hard-faced old woman, whom the boys learned later was Madame Couchard, the wife of the man who had extended his hospitality to the party, was attending to certain culinary duties. Boutelle and Couchard were seated on stools talking together in a low tone, while Mose, looking very uncomfortable, occupied another stool at the other side of the room. The men looked at the boys when they came in.

"Seet down and make yourse'f at home," said Boutelle, as if he was the owner of the house.

Jack and Bill pulled a low bench without a back over to where Mose was and joined him.

"What are you looking so glum about, Mose?" asked Jack. "We aren't so badly off. We've a roof over our heads and the prospects of sup-

per. In the morning, when it is light again, we'll be able to rejoin the boss."

"Dat's all bery well, but t'ings doan' look jes' right hyar. I's got my 'spicions dat dese yere people ain't no better dan dey ought to be."

"How?"

"Look at dat feller dat am 'sposed to be de boss ob dis shanty. His name am Couchard. He doan' look honest. Look at dat wife ob his ober by de fire. I neber seen sich a wicked-lookin' t'ing in all my born days. I 'spects she'd t'ink not'in ob cuttin' a man's t'roat ef she t'ought dar was money in it."

"Nonsense, Mose. I guess we're safe enough here."

"Dar ain't no nonsense 'bout it, Marse Jack. Yo' mark my words, we am in bad 'dicament. I doan' believe dat we eber seen de boss no more."

"Pshaw! what's the use of talking like that? I thought you had more sand."

"I ain't no coward, Marse Jack, but I tole yo' dat we is trapped."

"Trapped!" exclaimed Jack.

"Dat's it. We ain't got no more show to sabe ourse'fs dan a li'le piccanniny."

Mose spoke in a tone of conviction, and Jack and Bill hardly knew what to make out of his statements. They could not but admit that the looks of Couchard and his wife were not encouraging. The fact that the former was apparently on good terms with Boutelle did not reassure them, as they both regarded the Frenchman as a double-dyed rascal.

"What do you think, Bill?" said Jack.

"I don't know. I don't fancy the people of the house."

"They don't look like angels, I'll admit."

"I should say not. Suppose they rob you of that money you brought to get our outfit with at Macapa, where would we be?"

"We'd be in the soup, Bill; but we've got our guns with us, thank goodness. If anybody tries to get that money from me, I'll fill him full of holes."

"They might drug us at supper," said Bill.

"Then we'd better not drink anything."

At that moment voices were heard on the outside. Boutelle started up and said something to Couchard. Couchard nodded and rose to his feet. He walked over to the boys.

"Follow me," he said curtly, in fair English. "I will take you to your room, where you can rest a while until supper is ready. You are in the way here."

He laid his hands on Jack's shoulder, and the boy took the hint. Couchard led the boys into a narrow entry and up a flight of stairs to a landing as black as the ace of spades. He threw open an invisible door communicating with a low-ceiled room.

"Enter. I will return in a moment with a light," he said.

The boys went in and stood close together.

"This looks as if there was something on downstairs and they wanted to get rid of us," said Jack.

"I guess so," replied Bill.

"De day ob tribulation am at hand, I's 'feared," said Mose, in a lugubrious tone. "I 'spects we doan' get no supper, but dat we is put out ob de way instead."

Jack put his hand behind him and pulled out his revolver.

"Feel that, Mose. There's six bullets in that and I've got a belt full of cartridges around my waist. Bill is similarly provided. Somebody will get hurt pretty bad who tries to do us up," said Jack.

"Golly, I's glad dat yo' fellers has got somefin' to defend yo'se's wif'. I wish dat I had a gun. Yo' bet yo' life I'd shoot mighty quick," said Mose.

"Never mind; we'll defend you," said Bill.

The sound of Cuchard's returning footsteps caused Jack to put away his gun, and a moment later the Frenchman entered the room with a small, smoky lamp, which he placed on a shelf.

"When supper is ready I will call you," he said.

Then he went away.

"Well, fellow unfortunates, I can't say that I like the complexion of matters," said Jack. "I don't believe that Boutelle is really a stranger to the people of this house. I wouldn't be surprised if he is hand-and-glove with them."

"That's my opinion," said Bill; "and further, I believe that he brought us and the mules this way on purpose. It's all rot for him to pretend that he lost sight of Raymond's lantern. I never once lost sight of yours."

"Nor did I lose sight of the Frenchman's. You and Mose are both right. We are the victims of a piece of rascality. Probably the object is to steal the goods carried by the two dozen mules, as well as the mules themselves. As for ourselves, it may not be unlikely that they mean to do us to prevent our appearing as witnesses against them," said Jack.

"Then I think the best think we can do is to try to get away on the quiet," said Bill. "Yonder window might enable us to take French leave. Once outside, they never could find us in the darkness."

"You take a squint out of the window and see what you can make of the chances. I'll sneak downstairs and see what I can find out," said Jack.

He slipped off his shoes and left the room. Groping his way in the darkness to the stairs, he slipped down to the entry. The door into the living-room was shut tight, but it did not cut off the sounds that came from there. Jack heard the voices of several men, jabbering away at a great rate in French. Clearly there had been new arrivals. The boy didn't understand a word they said, a contingency he had overlooked in coming downstairs. He ought to have sent Mose. Looking through the keyhole, he saw Cuchard and two villainous-looking chaps talking to Boutelle, who appeared to be hail-fellow-well-met with them, which confirmed Jack's idea that the Frenchman was no stranger to the house.

"Oh, if I only understood French!" breathed Jack.

But he didn't, so what was the use of lamenting his inability to do so? He could learn nothing from the jargon he heard, so he hastened back to the room.

"Well, what did you find out?" asked Bill. "You wasn't long."

"Nothing. They're talking in French and I couldn't understand a word they said."

"Send Mose down. He'll understand them," said Bill.

"Will you sneak down, Mose?" said Jack. "You must be careful not to make any noise. Grope your way to the stairs, or, better, I'll hold the light for you. Take in what you hear and come back as soon as you can."

"Golly, I's afeard dey'll nab me. If dey done cotched me listenin' I reckon dat dis nigger would cotch somefin' more dan a flea in him ear," said Mose.

"Haven't you got the nerve to go?" said Jack. "Our lives may depend on you finding out what they intend to do with us."

"I's a-gwine. Ef I doan' come back yo' can reckon dat I's been turned into a black angel wid an ebony harp."

"Hold on, don't go that way. Kick off your shoes. Now don't stumble over yourself. I'll hold the light for you."

Jack took down the lamp and flung open the door. Standing on the threshold was a lovely girl of seventeen, with an olive complexion, eyes that shone like twin-stars, and a figure that was perfection itself. It was hard to say which was the most surprised—Jack or the girl herself.

CHAPTER X.—Jack's Sharp Trick.

The girl uttered an exclamation and then put her finger to her lips. With a quick glance over her shoulder she entered the room a step or two.

"Parlez-vous francais?" she asked, in a whisper.

Jack shook his head and pointed to Mose.

"Then you speak Eengleesh?" she added.

"Yes," said Jack eagerly.

"Listen. You are in great danger eef you remain in this house."

"So I suspected," replied Jack.

"No one that come here ever goes away again alive."

"Then what chance have we of getting away?"

"There is a way that I will show you."

"All right. We'll be greatly obliged to you if you do. We are ready to go with you."

"Not now. Eet is impossible. By and by after you have eaten and return to this room I will come and show you the way."

"Then we are safe for the present?"

"Oui. But do not drink of the coffee Madame Cuchard will give you. Eet will be drugged. Spill eet out some way that they do not notice. Then you will be safe. They expect that you will go to bed after supper, and some time in the night they will come here to kill you. But I will see that you escape ef I am not prevented."

"Miss, our gratitude will always be yours; but how is it that one so good as you consents to stay in this house?"

"Alas! I am in the power of Jules Cuchard, who is my stepfather. He brought me here from France, and I cannot escape from heem, though I would gladly do so," she answered, with a sigh.

"Why not fly with us? We will protect you with our lives," said Jack.

"Non, non; eet is impossible!"

"Not so if you will consent to put yourself un-

der our protection. No true born American boy would desert a girl in distress."

"Ah, you Americans are brave, but eet is too much to ask of you. I would embarrass you with my presence."

"Not by a jugful. You come with us and I'll see that you get away from these rascally people."

"Hush! Some one is coming. I must go."

She vanished into the darkness like a shadow as a man came upstairs. The man proved to be Boutelle.

"How you all feel, eh?" he said, standing at the door and looking at the boys with one of his wicked grins.

"We feel with our fingers, monsoo," replied Jack, not really intending to be funny, but because the words came into his mouth.

"You feel with your fongaire," replied the Frenchman. "Vat ansaire you call dat? You feel wiz your whole bodee. Non, I mean you feel wiz your sto-mack. Ees eet not so? You s'all be hongree by dees time, oui?"

"Aren't you?"

"Ve haf on ze table ze soopaire dees minute. I do you ze honaire to make of myse'f ze part of ze garcon. I escalate ze stair for your bene-feet. Come, follow me down to ze room below and eat your fill."

"All right," said Jack. "Remember, drink nothing," he whispered to Bill and Mose, as Boutelle walked toward the stairs.

They found the table laid out with food when they followed the Frenchman below and Boutelle introduced them to the other men, whom he called Jaques and Claude. The boys were given seats together, and were helped to a fragrant stew, the smell of which made their mouths water in advance. The bread was dark colored and not over-fresh, and the butter pretty bad, but the boys were not disposed to find fault with either. Two bottles of claret stood on the table, to which the men helped themselves liberally. Over at a kind of sideboard Madame Cuchard was pouring out the coffee.

"You like ze vin ordinaire?" Boutelle asked Jack, offering him one of the bottles.

The boys didn't drink wine, but as Jack knew their coffee would be drugged, he decided to accept some of it, and passed the bottle to his friends, first taking the precaution to see that there was nothing in his glass. The men jabbered away in a low grade of French. Mose easily understood all they said, but their conversation had no reference to the boys or the mules outside. The poor animals were looking for their belated supper, which they were not likely to get, and an occasional "hee-haw" echoed through the night air. There was plenty of the stew for everybody and to spare, and Cuchard encouraged the boys to take all they wanted, which you may believe they did, and quenched their thirst with the claret. Not being accustomed to wine, and the claret was rather weak stuff, their eyes began to sparkle and their spirits to soar. About this time the madame passed the coffee around. Then it was that Jack got a grand idea, but he didn't exactly know how to work it. He cudgelled his brain for a way to put it through. Suddenly he started up with an exclamation

"Vat ees ze mattar wiz you?" exclaimed Boutelle.

"Open the door. There is Monsoo Briquet at the window looking in."

Boutelle uttered an exclamation of consternation and looked, but he could not see any face at the window. He said something quickly in French to the others. Cuchard rose, went to the shelf, and put out the light. The other three got up and started for the door. Jack's heart gave a great thump. His ruse had succeeded better than he had expected. He got up and with great caution substituted the three cups of coffee set before himself and his friends for the cups placed in front of Cuchard, Jaques and Claude. With Boutelle's he could do nothing. Then he whispered to Bill what he had done, and Bill passed the information to Mose. In the meanwhile the rascals were waiting for the expected knock on the door, but it did not come. Finally Cuchard ventured to unbolt the door and look out. There was no one outside as far as he could see. The men listened intently, but no sound greeted their ears.

"The boy must have been mistaken," said Cuchard.

Having been satisfied that their alarm was groundless, they rebolted the door, turned up the light and returned to the table.

"By gar! See vat trouble you haf give us for nossing," said Boutelle to Jack. "You mus' have vat you call ze bats in ze belfry. You s'ink you see vat ees not zere. Make haste now and drink up your cafe and take yourse'fs off to your room. In ze morning ve start wiz ze sun."

The boys felt it was safe to drink of the changed coffee, which they did, though it had no milk in it and was not to their liking. Had it been as bitter as gall, they would have got away with it somehow, in order not to arouse the men's suspicions. The others drank their coffee too.

"Now you babes in ze vood get ze move on," grinned Boutelle, looking at the lads.

Without a word they left the table, followed to the door by the Frenchman, who wished to assure himself that they went upstairs.

"Gee! but that was a bang-up trick of yours, Jack!" cried Bill admiringly, when they had returned to their room. "Three out of four of those rascals will be drugged instead of us, and we'll have an easy time of it in making our escape."

"I hope so. With only Boutelle and the old woman to cope with, I guess we need not fear," said Jack.

"Golly, yo' am de limit, Marse Jack. After dis I swear by yo' ebery time, shore's yo' born," said Mose, with a wide grin.

"I'm going to turn out the light," said Jack; "then we'll wait for the girl to come for us. By the way, Bill, did you look at the window?"

"I did. It's nailed up, with boards on the outside. Escape that way is out of the question," replied Bill.

"Well, I guess it won't matter," said Jack, turning down the lamp.

Then he opened the door and they waited for the next act in the melodrama.

CHAPTER XI.—On the Amazon.

Nothing happened for about twenty minutes, and the boys passed their time in guarded conversation. Then they heard light footsteps on the landing.

"It's the girl," whispered Jack.

A shadow came toward the open door.

"Is that you, miss?" asked Jack.

"Oui," replied the girl, in a whisper. "Are you ready?"

"Bet your life we are!"

"Then follow me."

Just then the door below opened, and the voices of Boutelle and Madame Cuchard were heard.

"Hush!" whispered the girl.

They could all hear the words that were uttered, but only Mose and the girl understood them. The madame and Boutelle were talking over the strange thing that had happened to the three men.

"I tell you that you must have made a mistake and instead of giving the dosed coffee to the boys you gave it to your husband and Jaques and Claude. What kind of a fool are you, anyway?" said the Frenchman.

"No, no, I make no mistake," she protested.

"But the men are drugged. Can't you see that?"

"I see, and I do not understand."

"You're too thickheaded to understand what is as clear as sunshine. Well, perhaps it won't matter. The boys are tired and probably are asleep now. Do you come upstairs with me. You shall help me make a clean job of them."

Mose translated their conversation to his companions.

"So they are coming up to put us out of the way," said Jack. "We have got to take the bull by the horns. I'll look after the Frenchman. You take the woman, Bill, and you, Mose, stand ready to help either of us out. Get out your gun, Bill, and give the madame a rap on her nut. I'll do the same for the Frenchman. The coast will then be clear for our escape, and we'll take the young lady with us."

Hardly had he finished speaking when the stairs began to creak under the tread of the Frenchman and the woman. The boys waited for them inside of the door. Boutelle appeared first.

"The light is out," he said in French. "They are asleep. The job will be easy. You take the right hand bed, Madame Cuchard, and I'll take the left hand one. Clap your hand over the boy's mouth and then strike."

They stepped into the room, bent on their murderous work, and then Jack and Bill raised the butts of their revolvers. Thud! Thud! The would-be assassins dropped without a cry and lay still on the floor.

"Light the lamp, Mose," said Jack.

In a moment the light showed the young Americans that their work had been sure and complete. The girl, who understood what had happened, appeared at the door.

"Well, young lady, we are boss of the coop now," said Jack triumphantly. "By the way, what is your name?"

"Mariette Castaing."

Jack introduced himself and his friends.

"You have some rope in the house, haven't you, Miss Castaing?"

"Oui. Plenty."

"Fetch a couple of pieces so we can tie the madame and this rascal."

The girl went to get it. Jack knelt beside Boutelle and searched his pockets. From an inner one he drew forth the sailor's chart.

"I knew the rascal stole it from Brandon's dead body. He won't get the chance to steal it from me," he said.

Mariette brought the rope, and with it they tied the man and woman tightly back to back.

"I'll bet it will puzzle them to free themselves," said Jack. "Now let's go downstairs."

They found the three men below sprawled out over the table from which the dishes had been removed. They were safe enough for all night at least. Remembering the mules, Jack said they ought to be fed. As each mule carried its own fodder in addition to its load of goods, the boys got a couple of lanterns and proceeded to feed and water them.

"Now get your traps together, Miss Castaing, and we will be off," said Jack.

Half an hour later they were trying to find their way back to the path that led to the camp, under the guidance of Mose. In twenty minutes they saw the flickering of a pair of lanterns ahead. The lanterns were carried by Briquet and Raymond, who were searching for the missing mules and their drivers. The shouts of the boys were answered, and all hands came together. It was a thrilling story Jack had to tell Briquet, and the boss was staggered by the Frenchman's treachery. He complimented Jack on the part he had taken in the night's adventure, and assured him he would reward his services when they reached Macapa. As soon as they reached their camp, a blanket was handed to Mariette, and she was made as comfortable as circumstances would permit.

At sunrise the mule train went on, and reached Macapa two weeks later without further incident. Briquet paid the boys their wages, and gave Jack \$100 in addition. He wanted the boys to return with him. As he was going to remain a month in the town, Jack said it was possible they might join him if they got back from their trip up the Amazon in time. He said that he and Bill were going to hire a boat for a sail up the river. Mose wanted to go with them, and they agreed to take him. Mariette was anxious to get back to France, but was afraid her stepfather would find her in Macapa and take her back. So Jack decided to take her along with them if she would go. She gladly agreed to do it, for she had the utmost confidence in the boy. Looking around the water front, Jack found a roomy sloop for hire and chartered it for a month. He bought enough provisions to last for that time and stowed them in the hold. There was a stove and cooking utensils on the vessel and Mariette volunteered to act as cook and stewardess. After some trouble Jack rented the use of a windlass and a big coil of stout rope. He bought other things that he thought he might need in his treasure expedition, and then everything being shipshape for the trip, they went aboard the sloop early one morning, cast off from the wharf, and setting sail, steered their course

up the river. They had five hundred miles of water to pass over before they would strike the town of Serpa, which, according to the chart, was twenty-five miles east of the cataract. Their speed would largely depend on the strength and direction of the wind.

It was now that the knowledge the two young Americans had gained aboard the two vessels they had sailed in came into play. They were easily able to handle the sloop under all conditions, though, as a matter of fact, it was not a difficult task to sail a small fore-and-aft vessel up a river, where they were not likely to meet with anything more serious than a thunder-storm. During the first week they met a great many small craft, some of native construction, coming down from various towns and villages along either bank. They also passed quite a number of lumbering craft going up that were slower than molasses. But the farther they progressed the fewer vessels they came in contact with. The aspect of the river itself, however, remained much the same. The villages on the banks were few and far between. The landscape sometimes looked fertile and at other times rather barren. The weather was so hot that all hands, including Mariette, slept on deck under the awning that was kept continually spread to shield them in daytime from the sun. At Macapa the boys had added a couple of Remington rifles to their armament, though they were not sure that they would be needed, and also a small brass cannon, about two feet long, which Jack had picked up for a song, intending to take it to the States with him if things came his way.

"This is a great river," said Bill one afternoon, as the sloop, for lack of wind, was hardly making any progress toward the goal of their thoughts and hopes.

"Yes; when I went to school my geography said that the Amazon was the king of rivers."

"How long is it?"

"Why, it practically runs clear across this part of South America."

"It is 4,000 miles long," put in Mariette, who seemed to be well informed on the subject.

By this time both Mose and Mariette had been taken into Jack and Bill's confidence with respect to the treasure of the cataract, and they were just as interested as the young Americans about it. Both were promised a small share of the treasure if it was secured, and that naturally added to the zest with which they looked forward to its recovery from its secret hiding place.

CHAPTER XII.—A Storm on the River.

One day when about three-quarters of their journey had been slowly reeled off, for they were delayed by light winds and often no wind at all, the sloop was drifting along with the tide in a dead calm, the sky began to grow dark and threatening.

"We're in for something," said Bill, as the four young people sat around the open cockpit of their vessel in front of the door leading into the dark little cabin that was as stuffy a hole as one would care to be in, and consequently un-

endurable in so hot a climate as northern Brazil, four degrees below the equator.

"It behooves us to lower and secure our sails, I should say," said Jack, "for if a heavy wind comes on we are liable to be driven ashore somewhere along the banks, and it might be impossible for us to get off until some craft came along and pulled us off."

Accordingly the three boys stepped up on deck and first of all lowered the mainsail, which hung as limp as a stiff rag. It was secured to the boom and then they partially let down the jib, taking about three reefs in it. It was necessary to have a small amount of sail left exposed, even in a heavy blow, in order to be able to control the sloop, otherwise she would be at the mercy of the wind and in danger of going ashore anyway. The sky grew darker and darker, and flashes of lightning blazed through the clouds, followed by rumbling thunder. The awning was unshipped, rolled up and taken into the cabin, lest it be blown away, though so far there was not a breath of wind stirring. The heat was stifling, in excess of anything they had as yet experienced. The four people of the sloop actually gasped for breath, for they seemed to be in a great heated furnace. The river lay like a sheet of glass, and the trees on the banks drooped like stricken vegetation.

"I wish it would start in if it's going to come," said Bill. "A storm of wind and rain would be better than this. I feel as if I were melting away to a grease spot."

"By golly, ef dis nigger melts he'll leabe a black spot, ya, ya, ya!" laughed Mose.

The clouds sank lower, or appeared to do so, and rolled themselves into terrifying shapes, like fantastic masses of leaden-colored soot. Through them darted the streaks of lightning, each electrical display succeeded by claps of thunder that grew louder each time. Still no wind and the heat was something awful. Mose began showing symptoms of fear. The look of the sky was so unnatural that it struck him that the world was about to come to an end.

"Lordy, I's a wicked nigger, I is. Doan' took me away sudden like. I's afeard to die, 'clar to goodness I is," exclaimed the colored boy, after a brilliant flash and a tremendous clap of thunder.

The others didn't feel like laughing at the exhibition of terror on his part. Truth to tell, they were not unconcerned themselves. The fearful aspect of the sky, the like of which they had never witnessed before in a thunder storm, and which put one in mind of some scene out of Dante's Inferno, had its effect on them. It really seemed as if those lurid smoke-colored clouds were steadily sinking and closing in around the sloop, the river and the landscape to smother everything in sight.

"Oh, golly, we's done for, we shorely is," said Mose, with chattering teeth and wildly rolling eyeballs. "De Day ob Judgment am at hand and dis nigger ain't ready to stand afore de golden throne and be hauled ober de coals for all his wickumness. De ole Nick am ridin' on dem clouds, and he'll pick dis yere coon up wid him pitchfork as he goes by. Oh, Lordy, I's a terrible sinner. Gib me anudder——"

With a yell of terror Mose pitched headfore-

most into the cabin. The other three stared with blanched faces at each other. Mariette clung to Jack, as though he were her only rock of refuge in sight. Jack and Bill tried to be brave, but it was a sorry effort. They would have faced a gang of ruffians bent on taking their lives with far more pluck. Now a moaning hum came through the air.

"The wind is coming," said Jack.

"And the rain, too," said Bill, pointing across the river.

"Get into the cabin, Mariette," said Jack.

"But you are coming, too," she said earnestly.

"Yes, yes, presently."

A heavy puff of wind careened the sloop over a bit and then died away. The direction of the wind was indicated and Jack got up and seized the helm. Another heavier puff followed, and Jack moved the rudder so as to bring the sloop's head in line with it, which was directly across the river. Then with a roar the full force of the storm, rain and all, came upon them. In a moment or two the boys were soaked to the skin. Bill slammed the cabin door halfway shut to keep out the water, though the rain did not beat into it. The sloop was carried sternward straight toward the mouth of a tributary stream of the Amazon, and in an incredibly brief time was out of the main river. Both boys had to cling to the tiller on either side with all their weight to prevent the craft from veering around and presenting her broadside to the storm, which would have resulted in her immediately capsizing. Had she been headed the other way, with the wind, no such danger would have presented itself, for then the partly exposed jib would have come in proper play. Now the canvas was a menace instead of an advantage. There was every danger of going ashore on the narrow stream they had entered, but fortunately it was straight, and in line with the wind. Thus passed a full hour, by which time the sloop was several miles from the Amazon proper, and then the storm abated almost as suddenly as it came on. The fearful-looking clouds had passed away to the north, leaving the sky with an ordinary leaden look, and the landscape open as far as the eye could reach.

"Gee! I'm glad it's over, though I feel a whole lot cooler after it," said Bill.

"It was a corker as long as it lasted," said Jack. "We made a mistake in heading the craft into the wind. We ought to have let her run before it. I'm afraid we are bum navigators, after all."

The sloop was close in to a bight in the river bank, and Jack turned her around so as to get control of her and prevent them from going ashore. At this point a tongue of verdure ran out into the river. As the sloop came about, her nose grazed the point, but as she forged ahead as he came forward. More men then popped up behind him.

"Take a boat-hook and push her off, Bill," said Jack.

Bill jumped on the deck, picked up the boat-hook, and went forward. Jabbing the point of the implement into the soil, he pushed against it. The boat moved a little, but not much. At that juncture a low-browed native Brazilian suddenly appeared from a bunch of bushes.

"You take me on board?" he asked in Spanish, as he came forward, more men rising up behind him.

Bill didn't understand him and shook his head. The negro boy stuck his head out of the cabin door. Jack pointed to the men.

"Those chaps want something. See if you can understand them," he said.

Mose came into the cockpit.

"What do you want?" he asked in Spanish.

"We want to come aboard," replied the first man.

"They want you to take them aboard," said Mose to Jack.

"Tell them they can't come. That we aren't taking any passengers," said Jack.

Mose repeated Jack's words in Spanish.

"We only want to go to the nearest village," the fellow said.

Mose translated to Jack.

"Tell them we're not stopping any place along the river," said Jack.

"We're going to come on board anyway whether you like it or not," said the man, when Mose told them what Jack said.

Mose told them they had better not try it or they'd get hurt. The men grinned in an ugly way, said something to each other in a low tone, and then pulling out a knife each, jumped for the bows. At the moment they did so, Bill pushed the boat free. Before he could draw in the boat-hook the first rascal caught hold of it and was drawn splashing into the shallow water after the retreating sloop.

"Let go!" roared Bill, trying to shake the fellow off.

The fellow's companion rushed after him and seized him around the waist. Their united strength stopped the sloop momentarily, and then the second man rushed out in among the reeds nearly up to his waist and reaching out, seized the heel of the bowsprit. Jack ran forward, revolver in hand, to put an end to the affair.

"Let go or I'll shoot you!" he cried, pointing his weapon.

The fellow didn't understand his words, but his action was plain enough. He glared at Jack and hesitated. At this crisis in affairs an entirely new actor appeared on the scene and settled the difficulty in short order. An alligator darted out of the thick reeds a few yards away, and in quicker time than we can describe it, seized the rascal's thighs in his ponderous jaws and backed away. The fellow uttered a blood-curdling yell as, relaxing his hold on the sloop, he was dragged down into the water. His companion gave a yell too, let go of the boat-hook, and retreated out of the water as fast as he could go. A puff of wind swung the boat's head around in the ensanguined water, and she shot away from the spot. By this time the alligator and its victim had disappeared among the reeds, the other man had vanished into the bushes, and nothing remained to tell of the tragedy which had been enacted before the eyes of the three startled boys.

CHAPTER XIII.—Treasure of the Cataract

It was some little time before the boys recovered from the sight, and Jack was very glad that Mariette had not witnessed it. About the

middle of the third week they sighted Serpa. Their calculations as to the time it would take them to come up the river, get the treasure and return, were clearly way off. Their provisions wouldn't begin to last, but fortunately they would be able to purchase as much more at Serpa as they would require. They put in at a small wharf at the village, and Mose was deputed to buy fresh vegetables and other food. They remained a couple of hours at the village and then resumed their course up the river. When night closed in the sky was so bright and the atmosphere so clear, that they could easily see the character of the shore as they sailed along.

It was about ten o'clock that they opened up a small river on their left, which they judged to be the one they were in search of. Jack steered into it, and found the stream exceedingly rapid. What with the light wind not in their favor and partly shut off by many trees along the banks, and the swift downpour of the narrow river, they hardly made any progress at all.

"It's time to turn in, anyway," said Jack. "We'll moor the sloop to the bank, and to guard against any trouble from prowlers, we'll stand a regular watch, each of us in turn, from now till sunrise."

Bill watched till half-past two, and then called Jack.

"I might have been asleep for all the good my watching did," said Bill.

"Well, that may be, but you never can tell what might happen. We can't afford to take any chances," replied Jack.

Nothing happened during Jack's watch, which lasted the rest of the night. At breakfast Jack said he had decided to proceed the rest of the way to the cataract on foot, with Mose for his companion, as there was no wind that morning to help the sloop against the strong current.

"You remain on board with Mariette," said Jack to Bill. "I don't believe the cataract is far away. The swiftness of the stream indicates that we are on the right track. I trust that by to-morrow, at any rate, we'll have the treasure in the hold, ready to make tracks back for Macapa."

After breakfast, with a rifle each, Jack and Mose went ashore and started up the left bank of the stream. Jack carried the chart with him to identify the spot where the treasure lay. The ground was more or less obstructed by boulders, trees and bushes. Coming out of a bunch of the latter, they came face to face with a South American cayuse, or mule, feeding on the grass. He had a stout halter around his neck, the slack end of which showed that it had given way under a strain from a longer piece of rope.

"By golly, here am a mule. I reckum dat dis chile am gwine to hab a ride," said Mose.

Jack thought the colored boy's chance of a ride was doubtful, but he was wrong. The cayuse made no effort to get away, and permitted Mose to get on his back. The mule got a move on, and he and Mose disappeared at a slow trot ahead. Jack followed, and for some time heard nothing more from the colored lad. At last he saw him and the cayuse standing on top of a big rock ahead. When Mose saw Jack coming on he waved his hat and pointed downward toward the water. As Jack drew closer the rushing

sound of the water grew louder, and presently the cataract burst full on his sight. Mose rode his cayuse down, but made no attempt to get off. He watched Jack make his investigations. The landmarks all agreed with the chart, and the spot where the treasure was supposed to be was right under the big rock, which was hollowed inward close to the water. Having found out all he could, Jack and Mose, the latter still on the cayuse, started back for the sloop, where they duly arrived. Bill and Mariette were surprised to see Mose provided with an animal.

"Well, how did you make out, Jack?" asked Bill. "Did you find the cataract?"

"Bet your life I found it, and located all the landmarks, according to the chart. The treasure should be found under the big rock."

"How far is the cataract from here?"

"About half or three-quarters of a mile."

"How close can we get the sloop to it?"

"Perhaps a quarter of a mile, maybe more if the wind was strong enough and in the right quarter. At present there is no wind, so we can't take her any closer."

The boys were so anxious to get at the treasure that they couldn't wait for a wind to take the sloop closer to the cataract. They decided to leave the craft in Mariette's care, and Jack handed her one of the rifles for her protection in case of need.

"I don't believe you will be molested, for this neighborhood appears to be entirely deserted, but if you should be, discharge the gun. We'll hear the report and will rush back at once," said Jack.

Getting out the long rope, they had provided for hauling the box out of the water, and tying it to the cayuse's back, the three boys started for the cataract. In due time they reached the big rock.

"One of us will have to dive under that rock," said Bill, "to see where the treasure box is, and to attach the rope to it."

"That's up to me," said Jack. "I'm going to tie an end of the rope around my waist, for the current is so strong that it would carry me away without such a protection. You chaps will hold on to the rope and look out for me."

As the boys wore very little clothing in that latitude, Jack intended to dive just as he was, his shoes excepted. They went up to the top of the big rock with the rope, one end of which Jack tied securely around his waist, then, after kicking off his shoes, he told his companions to lower him down over the edge of the rock to the water. This was done. As soon as Jack's body was partially in the stream the swing of the current carried him in under the rock and against a sort of platform on which he secured a foothold. Staring him in the face, in a hole in the rock, on a level with the water, he saw an iron box, the projecting end having a stout handle riveted to the chest.

"The treasure box!" ejaculated Jack, tickled to death at the sight of it. "Bill and I will surely be rich when we get this to the sloop."

He had fetched the other end of the rope down with him to tie to the box when he found it, and this he proceeded to do without delay. He tied a half dozen knots to make sure that it would hold, for the box was undoubtedly weighty. Then

he jumped into the water, and the current carried him out in sight of his friends. He signalled for them to pull him up, and they did so at once.

"I've found the treasure box," he said, as soon as he landed on top of the rock.

"You have? Fine and dandy!" cried Bill, smiling all over his face.

"And I tied the end of the rope to it. Now we'll cut the rope in half, and hitch the end to the mule, and see if he can drag it out of the hole and up high enough for us to throw the other piece of rope around it and swing it in on the rocks below," said Jack.

The mule was led forward, and the rope tied around his middle. Jack took up the other rope and he and Bill went to the rocks alongside the big one, leaving Mose to look after the mule. As soon as they were in position, Jack shouted to Mose to go ahead.

"Gee up, yo' ole cayuse!" cried Mose.

The mule started, but as soon as the rope got taut and he felt a weight at the end, the animal stopped.

"What's de mattah wid yo', honey? Get a move on yo'. Gee up!"

Mose slapped the mule on the flank and he started ahead again. The pull on the rope drew the box slowly out of its hole, and soon it swung clear, just above the surface of the water. The mule began to stagger, but making a desperate effort, he drew the box up perhaps a yard. He could do no more, and stopped.

"Stay dar and hold on," cried Mose, who then rushed down to see the rest of the performance.

He was deeply interested in the problem of how Jack and Bill were going to land the box. Jack's plan was to throw the coiled end of the rope he held so that it would drop over the box and then into the water. The current would bear it down close to the rocks, and it could be recovered. With both ends in their hands, Jack and Bill intended to pull the box as much as possible toward them, which would not be much, let it swing back, pull again, let go, and keep on repeating the movement until, by degrees, they got it to oscillate enough so that at the proper moment Mose should suddenly cut the line above and the box would fly in on the rocks, after which they would attach the mule to it again and endeavor to drag it on to the level ground. Unfortunately, before they could carry this grand scheme out, the strength of the mule on the rock above began to give out. The animal slipped, lost its balance, and was pulled over into the foaming river. Mose and the boys uttered exclamations of dismay as they saw the chest disappear.

CHAPTER XIV.—Conclusion.

"Oh, golly!" cried Mose, "de treasure am lost for suah."

But it was not, or this story would have a poor ending. The box alighted on a flat rock in the cataract, and when the spray occasioned by its contact with the water had disappeared, the boys could see it plainly enough. The mule had gone down with the stream, but was swept in near a point of the bank, and scrambled ashore.

"Get after that mule, Mose, and fetch him back?" said Jack.

The negro boy started to obey orders.

"Now how are we going to get that box to the bank?" asked Bill, much concerned over the problem.

"Oh, we'll get her somehow," said Jack, confidently.

"I don't see how."

"You and Mose will have to let me down again from the top of the big rock. I'll make the line fast to it, and then, after securing the other line, which broke off close to the mule, I'll pull myself back. Understand?"

When the mule was brought back, Jack's plan was put into operation, and the treasure box was, after much trouble, finally landed on the bank, and dragged by the mule away from the rocks. At Macapa Jack had obtained a small truck, equipped with four iron wheels, and he sent Mose to the sloop to get it. In the course of three-quarters of an hour the negro had returned with it, dragging it over the ground behind him.

The mule hauled the box upon it, then the ropes were removed from the box, and attached to the truck. The mule was started ahead, and by easy stages, they eventually reached the bank opposite the sloop with their prize. Marietta had dinner awaiting for them, and they sat down to it right away. After it was finished, the stern of the sloop was hauled close in to the bank, boards brought for the purpose were laid from the bank to the side of the cockpit, and the box, still on the truck, was shoved across them by the boys, and the chest slid down into the cockpit on skids. The mule had been of such service to them that it seemed a shame to leave the animal to his own resources again. Jack decided to "tote" him across the stream on the sloop, and let Mose ride him down to Serpa, where they would meet him. They started on their return journey after breakfast next morning.

They reached Serpa just before dark, and made fast to the wharf, where they found Mose and the mule, who had preceded them by several hours.

Next morning Jack went ashore to hunt up tools with which to open the chest. It took Jack and Bill many hours to break open the cover, and then they found it filled with bags of gold coin and a box full of unset jewels, worth many thousands of dollars. A dozen small boxes were obtained, and the bags of gold, which they calculated would foot up over \$100,000, were nailed up in them. The iron box was then dropped over into the river and sank to the bottom. Another supply of provisions was taken on board, and they started for Macapa in high feather over their success. For several days nothing happened to vary the monotony of the trip down the river. The wind was provokingly light, and they made slow progress, particularly when the tide was against them, which happened twice in every twenty-four hours.

It may seem strange to the reader that a powerful stream of water, fed by so many big streams throughout its length, the whole naturally setting toward the Atlantic Ocean, should be in any way influenced by the tides, particularly at a considerable distance from its mouth;

but such is the fact—the mouth of the Amazon River is 150 miles wide, and it admits the tide for nearly 500 miles. One afternoon a sloop, somewhat larger than their own, hove into view around a turn they were approaching. As there were few objects to interest them along their way, the sloop naturally attracted their attention.

"That craft is bound for Serpa, I suppose," said Bill.

"Not necessarily," answered Jack. "There are trading towns further west than Serpa, not to speak of those up the various rivers behind us. The craft may be going a long distance up the river for all we can say."

As the two vessels were headed, they would pass some distance apart, but it was not long before Jack noticed that the strange craft had altered her course, so that her bows were pointed across their own sloop's course. They thought nothing particular of this, as they supposed the strange vessel was aiming to reach the other side of the river by degrees. When the distance between them was reduced to a few hundred yards, Jack shifted the helm so as to give the other craft more room. To his surprise, the strange vessel veered enough to keep her head almost directly for the sloop.

"I wonder what that means?" said Jack. "Looks as if the people aboard of her wanted to communicate with us. Go forward, Mose, and if they hail, ask them what they want."

The colored boy jumped on deck and went forward. Ten minutes more sufficed to bring the two crafts pretty close.

"Keep off!" shouted Jack, "or you'll run into us," and with those words, he started the sloop on again, steering wide of the other.

The strange vessel steered directly for her.

"They don't mean any good, whoever they are," said Bill. "I see no one but the fellow at the helm, but there are probably others below. Maybe they are river thieves, and their object is to capture us and loot the sloop."

"They'll have their work cut out, then. Bring out the rifles from the cabin. Come aft here, Mose. Better get under cover, Mariette, for we may have trouble here," said Jack.

The girl, however, refused to budge. If there was going to be a scrap, she was willing to help the boys to the best of her ability, which stand proved her to be a plucky girl. Bill brought out the three rifles and handed one to Mariette to hold for Jack.

"Give him a shot to show that we mean business," said Jack.

Bill raised his Remington and fired so that the steersman would feel the wind of the bullet. He dropped down almost out of sight. Presently a hand appeared above the rail and a revolver was discharged. The bullet whizzed between Bill and Mariette. That proved they had an enemy to deal with.

"Shoot any one you see!" cried Jack to Bill and Mose. "Crouch down, Mariette, and hold the tiller the way it is."

The girl obeyed, and Jack took his rifle from her. The three opened fire on the cockpit of the stranger, and the splinters flew in a shower, but the helmsman still held his course for the sloop's bows. The boys stopped further firing till they

could see somebody to shoot. In a minute or two the strange vessel glided alongside their bows, and suddenly three men sprang up out of the cockpit and started to board at the bows. They came in a bunch, with revolvers in their hands. The boys recognized them at once as Jules Cuchard, Jaques and Clude, and they looked mighty wicked and determined. There was no time to order them back, which would have been useless, anyway, so Jack and Mose raised their rifles to shoot. Bill, instead of following suit, pulled the piece of tarpaulin cloth off the little brass cannon, which he knew was loaded with a handful of slugs. The vent-hole was primed, ready to be touched off, and was protected by a shield. With one hand Bill raised the shield, and with the other he ignited a match and touched the powder. A ringing report followed and the hail of slugs fairly swept the rascally attackers off the bows back into the cockpit of their own craft. None was killed, but the legs of the three were either broken or badly cut up. At any rate, they were placed hors de combat. Jack ran forward and looked into the other boat. Crouching beside his mangled companions, with his hand on the tiller holding the boat against the sloop, he recognized the villainous Boutelle.

"Sheer off, now, you rascal, or I'll put a ball into you!" cried Jack, covering him with his rifle.

The scoundrel instinctively threw up his hands in token of submission. The released tiller allowed the vessel to float off, and the sloop glided away from her. They met with no further adventure on their down trip, reaching Mapaca ten days later.

Jack found that the sloop was for sale, and purchased her at a fair price. Then, reprovisioning her, they made the run to Cayenne, without incident, favored by fair weather and a good breeze. From Cayenne they kept on to Georgetown, where the sloop was sold cheap. They took passage on a British steamer for New York, with their gold and box of jewels, the steamer stopping at the principal West Indies islands en route. On their arrival at New York, the jewels were turned over to the customs authorities to be appraised and the duty assessed. Jack paid the duty with cash realized from the sale of the gold, and most of the jewels were then sold. The amount realized from the treasure was \$175,000, of which Jack and Bill took \$75,000 each, and the other \$25,000 was divided between Mose and Mariette. Jack and Bill decided to remain in New York and go in business together. Mariette concluded not to return to France, as she and Jack had become much interested in each other, and did not want to part company. Mose went to New Orleans, looking like a colored dude, to surprise his people there with his remarkable prosperity. Subsequently Jack and Mariette married, and the place of honor on the walls of their handsome house is occupied by the stolen chart, in a glass frame, which ever reminds them of how they secured the treasure of the cataract.

Next week's issue will contain "A GAME YOUNG SPECULATOR; or, TAKING A CHANCE ON THE MARKET."

CURRENT NEWS

BOTTLES IN FOUNDATION

Gone are the days of riotous living in Horton, Kan., as evidenced by the dismantling of a former resort and the construction on its site of a barber shop. The contractor has utilized the stocks of bottles in the warehouse and the piles of flasks in the yard instead of stone as the concrete filling for the foundation. The coffin of four full quarts stands braced by a half-pint basket of firewater containers. Bourbon and applejack alike are gone, but their memory still clings to the possible patrons of the shop.

LOST MAN'S BODY FOUND

The body of a man identified as a lumberjack, who was lost in the woods near Kelliher, Minn., about seven years ago, was found the other day by men who were blasting stumps on the farm of B. M. Armstrong, two and one-half miles northeast of Kelliher. Rings and clothing were identified by old settlers as belonging to Tom Murray, an old woodsman who was lost in the woods one winter night. It is believed the man attempted to make his way to Kelliher from the cabin of a settler where he was visiting, and perished.

WOMAN RAISED POTATO CROP

Mrs. Earle Remington, society matron, has just harvested a crop of potatoes which she raised herself on a vacant acre adjoining her home, No. 1436 Crenshaw Boulevard, Los Angeles, Cal. But she didn't do it, as one might suppose, as an indignant yet practical thrust at the potato profiteers. She did it for charity. The aristocratic spuds will be sold for the benefit of the Assistance League of Southern California. Moreover, there are some beans and corn coming along that will go to the same worthy cause.

"I wanted to do something of my very own to help the league," Mrs. Remington explained, leaning gracefully on the hoe which she has made a terror to weeds. "So I took up farming. I did all the work myself, except the ploughing, and I like it. It is great fun watching things grow and knowing that one is doing something worth while. I believe if more society women would take up the idea there would be less frivolity and more health, as well as more potatoes. It was lots of fun, and I also acquired a fine coat of tan.

Mrs. Remington rolled back a sleeve and exhibited some of the evidence. It was very convincing evidence.

SNAKES AT FASHIONABLE RESORT

Alarmed by the appearance of hundreds of rattlesnakes and copperheads in the vicinity of Millbrook, N. Y., the fashionable summer colony of this country, the farmers, and other residents have organized to destroy the reptiles.

Within two days, two men have been bitten and taken to hospitals. These are George Swenson and Charles Simpson, both of Poughkeepsie. The former has been employed at Millbrook, while the latter was there visiting. Swenson was brought to St. Francis Hospital in this city,

and Simpson was placed on the N. D. and C. train at Millbrook and taken to St. Luke's Hospital, Newburgh. Both are in a critical condition.

Swenson was sitting on a wall in Millbrook, when he heard a peculiar whirring sound. Not recognizing it as anything familiar, he looked about and was horrified to find that he was staring at a rattlesnake, which was coiled, ready to strike. Instinctively, he threw his hand in the air to shield his face, and as he did so the snake struck, burying its fangs in his arm. Remembering all that he had heard of first aid in snake-bite cases, the young man fashioned a tourniquet, then took his penknife and cut away the flesh from the part of his arm penetrated by the snake's fangs.

ABOUT THE DISMAL SWAMP

The name Dismal Swamp is a by-word everywhere, and a legend has grown up around it of a dreary, boggy, unknown region of snakes and dark, damp thickets, where runaway slaves fled for refuge. This region is but little better known to-day than it was when George Washington himself laid out a route through it.

The swamp is old historically. The first settlers at Norfolk and the region round about knew of it as a wild, impassable bit of country full of game and of valuable timber—cypress, so good for making shingles; juniper, black gum and beech. In 1728, Col. Byrd, while trying to establish the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, ran a survey across it, working with the greatest difficulty and making only a mile a day through the thick growth. He it was who named it the Dismal Swamp.

Later surveys and government maps show that the wilderness contains about 800 square miles of wood and water lying in a tract twenty miles wide and forty-five long, and extending twenty miles into Virginia and twenty-five miles into North Carolina. The soil is a sort of rich black vegetable mould, dry and caky at some seasons, and saturated with water at others.

The whole region is like a huge sponge, alternately dry and wet, and as the swamp level, curiously enough, is twenty feet above tidewater, it is the source of many rivers and streams.

There are deer in the woods, but it is the wild cattle that give the best sport. The ancestors of these "reed fed" cattle, as they are called, strayed in from the fields and took up their abode in the swamp. The result is a race of small, active, wild cattle, the flesh of which is a delicious combination of the qualities of wild game and tame animals.

There is a chance that before many years the greater part of the swamp will be redeemed from its present wildness into civilized farm land, but it will be many years before the bear and wild cattle and moccasin snakes disappear from their refuges, and before the rare plants and birds that still draw botanists and ornithologists from all parts of the country will be found only in museum show cases.

Lost On Mt. Erebus

— OR —

A Boy Explorer At the South Pole

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XI.—(Continued)

"Way up here, you would certainly need some one, if only to scold and talk to. Same here for myself. We certainly don't have a very varied bill of fare. A biscuit a piece and pemmican. Cold tea, too. By George! I've a notion to try to heat this tea over that red-hot crevice back yonder—"

"No; you shall not!" Madge seized the tea canteen to prevent Joe from going back and hanging it over the edge. "Don't you see, Joe? Your presence, your voice, are more to me here than any amount of hot drinkables. I love cold tea."

"I don't. But I will submit on one condition."

"What is that?" the girl smiled at him sweetly, and Hawley restrained himself from taking her in his arms.

"That you finish your meal and go right to bed—see?"

He pulled the sleeping bag up over her head, wishing that he might hug the dear girl, bag and all. He often had to restrain these impulses. Daily, amid the horrors of this formidable journey, that might well daunt the stoutest man, he had noted her patience, perseverance, resolution, and her more than feminine adaptability.

Truly she was a girl out of ten thousand, and Joe Hawley felt that she was becoming the only girl in the wide world—for him.

But for the present and for many days to come he knew that it would be more than selfish in him to tell her this.

Should they two finally reach the furthest south and return alive—ah! then—then—what might he not say to her?

But now he carefully, almost tenderly performed the little duties that would make her comfortable, then went back to his reckonings, in which he became finally absorbed.

The Aurora's light enabled him to figure, nor was he conscious that Madge herself watched him long, with a growing tenderness that at last gave way to slumber as she sighed:

"Dear Joe! What would I do without him?"

Hawley worked at his observations, and finally completed his self-imposed task, including a succinct account in his diary of the events of the last two or three days. Then he looked over their packs, adding a little more weight to his own, and thereby making Madge's a little lighter.

"I don't know of any girl in history," Joe ruminated, "that was situated exactly as she is now. It is awful to think about, even for a man. Men are the ones who are naturally expected to try for these big, impossible things. She must think lots of her father, to undertake his work, the work

he would have undertaken but for his getting his leg broken.

"I'm glad I'm with her, now that he is not able to be. If I know myself, not even Captain Barclay would exercise a more tender care or a deeper respect for her in this awful solitude than I.

"For his sake—for mine, too—I hope that I may return her to him just as he would wish she should be returned. We may learn to like each other—that cannot be helped. But we will be worthy of his respect—and—and—"

Hawley yawned heavily and realized that he was almost asleep. Five minutes later he was in his own bag and deep in the land of dreams himself.

They had made their bivouac just far enough within the seam so that the warm breath of the volcano would counteract the extreme cold entering from the outlet.

From the time when Joe went to sleep until morning was not many hours. He awoke, after various dreams, wherein Madge and himself were undergoing sundry adventures more or less hazardous.

This was accounted for by the intimate relations which their polar journey together had necessarily established between them.

Always it was Madge who was being drawn into some crevasse, or other peril, and always Joe was there to exert himself in saving the girl. At last they were walking along the lip of the crater of Erebus, and Madge was forever slipping over the edge.

In his dreams this grew monotonous, even exasperating to Joe.

"Next time she slips," he said to himself in his dream, "I will put myself between her and this crumbling lip that is always giving way. Then I'll see that we keep further from the edge."

In some way this exchange took place. But it seemed to Joe that some one who was not Madge gave him a push. When he felt himself falling this some one showed Hawley his face, at the same time drawing the girl back to safety.

"Gracious!" wailed Joe, feeling that he was doomed. "That's Ben Rucker's face."

Madge herself realized this at the same time. She sprang after Hawley's falling figure, and Joe, in his dream, now a nightmare, heard her scream:

"Joe! Save me! I'm falling—falling!"

So crushing was the evidence that both of them were falling that Hawley woke up. He opened his eyes lying down and jumped to his feet a very wide awake young man. In his ears the same cry was ringing. It was further off, yet distinct.

"Save me! I'm falling!"

Instinctively Hawley turned to look at the girl's sleeping bag, which was between him and the outlet a few yards beyond.

Then his hair rose and his skin prickled.

Madge's bag was empty. Empty!

Beyond, like a voice that was all but lost in that terrible white silence, came her far-away cry:

"Save me, Joe!"

A second convinced him that, wherever she had gone, it was not toward the heat-belching crevice which crossed the seam or cavern where they had passed the last few hours.

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES.

WRIT-SERVER STRIPS HORSE

Sam Page, a local junk dealer, of Bucyrus, O., who left his wagon outside a butcher shop door, returned to find the harness gone and the horse standing complacently between the shafts. A local constable, Adolph Rinker, had a replevin issued in a Justice Court on the harness and had served the replevin while the owner was buying meat.

PUPIL'S RECORD PERFECT FOR YEARS

Albert Tegen, son of Mrs. August Meyer of Manitowoc, Mich., graduated from high school recently with a record, it is believed here, never equalled. During the entire fourteen years of his schooling he never missed a class and has never been tardy. He will go to the University of Wisconsin next year and says he hopes to finish four more years of perfect attendance.

DOG GUIDES BLIND MAN

Raymond Randolph lost his sight at the Battle of Santiago and his Spanish fox terrier, Lucy acts as his eyes. After having traveled for years in all parts of the country, led all the time by only the faithful and careful dog, Randolph, a Baltimore, is now living in the city again at 125 North Greene Street. He earns a livelihood by selling pin-cushions, besides tuning pianos and performing other jobs. Lucy was born in Spain of a family trained especially for guiding blind people, it is said. Its master says the dog never leaves his side for any one with good vision, but will go to another blind person and lead the way just as she does for him.

WILL CONTEST SETTLED

A will which Isaac Frank Stone, of Greenwich, Conn., former president of the National Aniline and Chemical Agency, signed merely with a scratch of the pen, was admitted to probate here by Judge Radford to-day, following a contest, in which Grace Stone Loyd, of Lynchburg, Va., daughter of the testator, asserted that her father was of unsound mind when he executed the will.

The estate, as estimated in the petition, amounts to \$700,000. Grace Stone Loyd is to receive \$10,000 outright and the income from \$100,000, the principal to revert to her children on her death.

SOME REMARKABLE RUINS

Excavations in the Pueblo ruins in Aztec, N. M., carried on by the American Museum of Natural History of New York City, have brought to light a sealed room which gives every evidence of a high artistic development on the part of those who built it.

Dr. Clark Wissler, curator of the museum's department of anthropology and director of the expedition, gives the following description of it in a letter telling of the discovery:

"The room is in perfect condition. The interior is plastered and painted in a brilliant white with dull red side borders and a running series of triangular designs. No room approaching this in

beauty and perfection has ever been discovered in America. There are several adjoining rooms that seem to have some relation to this, but it will be some time before they can be dug out.

"What we have is obviously the holiest sanctum or shrine of these prehistoric people. There is not much in it, all the sacred objects having been removed from the altar. But a sacred serpent is carved in wood over the ceiling. It is 2½ feet long and of the finest workmanship. On the ceiling beams are imprints of hands made by rubbing white paint on the palms and fingers and then pressing down upon the beams. Several strands of beautifully made rope hang from the ceiling, presumably for the support of hanging objects. On the floor were a large number of nicely cut stone slabs, one of which was 2½ by 1½ feet and 1¼ inches thick.

"There is a painted room in one of the cliff houses in Mesa Verde Park that has some resemblance to this, but does not compare with the one we have just found. This room is, however, one more suggestion that the people who lived in the cliff houses were the founders of the culture at Aztec and Bonito."

Dr. Wissler writes that the ruin is now most impressive, a large part of it having been uncovered by the American Museum excavation party, which has for five seasons past worked under the direction of Earl H. Morris. He adds:

"Since the greater part of the west side is now uncovered, one can get a full sweep over this immense complex of stone walls and quaint doorways. This west side of the ruin was occupied last, for here all the rooms are well filled with objects left behind, whereas on the side first excavated, and apparently long unoccupied, we found little.

"Our excavations have revealed one calamity that befell this city. The greater part of the east and north sides were swept by fire. We cannot be sure that this was due to one big fire, but it was most likely so. The ceilings were of wood, supported by great logs of cedar and spruce, overlaid by split cedar and bark. These fell down upon others, and lay in the lower rooms in great charred masses. No doubt many precious objects went out in this great fire. As I have said before, we found the bodies of several unfortunates caught in the rooms.

"As the fire did not reach the west side, we find a large number of rooms with their ceilings still intact, and household utensils on the floor just as they were left.

"I have spent some time estimating the amount of timber used in building this city. There were the logs of some 200 pine trees, 30 feet long and about 12 inches in diameter. About 600 cedar logs of the same size, averaging 10 feet in length. (The cedar here rarely produces a longer trunk). About 1,200 straight, beautiful poles of pine and cottonwood. Finally, there are not less than 100 cords of split cedar splints for covering the ceilings. All this wood was worked with stone. From this it is clear that these people were good 'lumberjacks.'"

IN THE NICK OF TIME.

By D. W. Stevens.

Night shadows were creeping over the landscape as Sam Carter came to a pause near the banks of a narrow creek, which was overhung by trees and green bushes. A following-piece was flung across one shoulder, while at his belt dangled several squirrels, trophies of the afternoon's gunning.

The sound of voices had suddenly brought the young sportsman to a halt—voices raised high in angry discussion.

"You are an interloper here, and shall never step into a dead man's shoes."

"I have no wish to; but I mean to see the old place, and kiss Ida for the sake of old times."

"Scoundrel!"

Then the voices were drowned by the sounds of a scuffle.

What did it mean?

Sam Carter moved quickly forward and peered through a thicket, into an open space, to see two tall forms engaged in a furious and desperate struggle. He saw the gleam of a knife, and knew that the struggle was a deadly one.

Presently a gasping cry announced a fatal termination to the struggle. One of the men went down, and the concealed sportsman saw the tall form of the victor bending over the man on the ground, holding a bloody knife in his hand.

"This will put you behind prison walls, Master Walter," muttered Carter, as he turned from contemplating the scene and hurried by a roundabout course to a mansion not many rods distant.

Night now whelmed the earth.

For some minutes Sam Carter remained outside, hesitating about entering.

"This will kill his proud mother," muttered the underling. "When old Clawson disinherited his eldest born, and left Eastlawn and all its great wealth to the runaway Oscar, he little thought that he was signing the death warrant of both his children.

While Sam Carter stood thus hesitating and soliloquizing a step fell on his ear, and an instant later he was confronted by a pallid face—the face of Walter Clawson, the disinherited son of the dead speculator.

Why the old man, but two months dead, had left his vast fortune to his youngest son, Oscar, a boy who had fled from home six years before, cutting off Walter with a shilling, was more than the friends and neighbors could understand.

Old Clawson was a bit miserly. He loved his wayward younger son in spite of his unfilial conduct, and just before his death left everything to the wanderer, if living. In the event of Oscar's death, all the property, save the widow's third, reverted to Ida Kingley, the old man's niece, and one whom Walter had long endeavored to win for a wife.

Sam Carter was employed as stableman and overseer on the estate, a position he had filled for some years.

Soon after the death of old Mr. Clawson a let-

ter had come to the widow, announcing the safe arrival of her long-wandering son from a foreign land, and in a few days he expected to be home again.

This night he had come, only to meet a terrible doom ere his foot touched the threshold of the old home.

"Ha! You here?" ejaculated Walter, in a husky tone. "What are you about here? Go to your stables, man, and don't show yourself again to-night."

"I have a right to be here, Walter Clawson—a better right than you. Go in and tell you mother and cousin, Ida, where Oscar Clawson is at this hour. They will never see him alive. I can swear to that."

Then Sam Carter turned on his heel and rushed away.

Walter Clawson started, and gazed with dilating eyes after the retreating form of the stableman. Then a groan escaped his lips.

"My God! What does he know?"

With this gasping cry the pallid man pushed open the door and entered. He was composed when he entered the presence of his mother and Ida, but his face was still deathly pale.

"Where have you been, Walter? I thought you were going to the depot to meet Oscar. We expected him to-night, you know, and it is now full time he was here. The train has been gone an hour."

"It has," admitted the trembling man.

"You have not seen Oscar? Oh, this suspense!" murmured the widow. "He did not come to-night, I am sure, or he would have been here before now."

"No, he did not come."

Walter Clawson uttered the words slowly, as if in a dream. Then, unable longer to bear the strain, he hurried from the presence of his mother to his own room.

Slowly the moon climbed up from the dark horizon and lit the night with exquisite beauty. Walter still sat at the window of his room, glaring out upon the landscape.

Presently dark objects were seen to move along the country road to the front of the house. A moment they paused at the gate, then entered, and hurried up the walk to the front door.

"We want your son Walter," was said to the woman who opened the door.

The man in the room above waited to hear no more, but hurried below and confronted the men. He knew them. One was Sam Carter and another a deputy sheriff.

"You have come to arrest me?"

"Yes."

"My soul! what is this for?" cried Mrs. Clawson, and the pallid face and startled eyes of the fair girl looking over the speaker's shoulder would fain asked the same question.

As a pair of handcuffs snapped over Walter Clawson's wrists Sam Carter sent a significant look, full of gloating triumph, into his face.

"We arrest your son for murder," said the officer, coolly.

"Murder!"

"Aye, for the murder of his brother Oscar!"

"Ah! This is your work, Sam! Mother—Ida! There's a plot to ruin me. I am innocent, and can prove it!" uttered Walter, in a tone of bravado.

Early on the following day Ida and her aunt, in company with Sam Carter, went to the country village, to be at the examination. Carter said nothing of the tragedy during the journey, and the women did not question him.

The only witness sworn was Sam Carter, who gave the evidence he possessed in a plain, straightforward way.

The prisoner was remanded to jail, to await the action of the Circuit Court, soon to convene.

Search was made for the body, but none was found for some days. Nearly a mile down the creek that ran through Eastlawn a body was at length found, which was too greatly disfigured by decay and the work of the fish for identification.

It was readily accepted, however, as the body of the murdered heir, since several had seen Oscar leave the train on the afternoon of the murder and turn his steps toward Eastlawn.

When the day of trial came the evidence was too strong against the accused to admit of a doubt as to his guilt.

On the morning set for the trial Walter Clawson astonished court and people by pleading guilty.

"I have a short story to tell, and then I am ready to receive the sentence of the court," said the prisoner, when given an opportunity to speak by the judge. "Most people know that my brother inherited all the property left by our father, and that I was literally cut off with a shilling. I am not going to say that I did not feel a little bitter over this, for to me it seemed unjust. I did feel bitter, and when wandering by the brookside on the evening of Oscar's return I was nursing my bitter feelings, trying to crush them out, when who should confront me but Oscar himself. He had come up along the brook bank—one of his old haunts—and approached the house from the rear.

"Thus we met. Oscar was handsome and insolent. He spoke lightly of one I love better than life—Ida Kingley—and we quarreled. I cannot say if I used the words attributed to me by Sam Carter, but I know that we clinched. I seized my brother's throat in a fierce clutch. He drew a knife and attempted to strike me. Dropping one hand, I seized his wrist, and turned the point of the gleaming blade from me to save my own life. Both went to the ground in a heavy fall. I tore myself loose, to find the knife buried in the breast of Oscar. I did not send it there. As God is my judge, I had no thought of taking my brother's life. Instantly, after seeing what I had done, I fled from the spot."

"You threw the body into the creek."

"No! As Heaven is my witness, I did not!" asserted the doomed man, with husky solemnity.

This was the end.

The judge's sentence was death, and Walter Clawson was to pay the forfeit at the end of six weeks.

On the evening before the day set for the execution Ida repaired to her lover's cell for the last time.

"There is no hope, Ida?"

"Alas, none," answered the heartbroken girl, as she was drawn to the embrace of the prisoner.

At length the jailer came to announce that the hour of execution was at hand.

With one last lingering kiss and caress, Ida suffered herself to be led from the cell, and the clang of the closing door shut out the last ray of light from the heart of the doomed man.

Morning dawned bright and beautiful.

Ten o'clock came, and Walter Clawson, the fratricide, was led forth to his doom.

Mrs. Clawson was ill in bed at home, but Ida was not far away, her cheeks flushed with feverish excitement, anxious to catch one glimpse of the man she loved ere he was led to his doom.

Slowly the procession filed from the jail, and halted not until the foot of the scaffold was reached.

With wonderful coolness the fratricide ascended the steps and stood revealed upon the scaffold.

Then the fatal noose was adjusted, and—

"Stop the execution!"

A voice, clear and sharp, rang from a distant part of the crowd. A frown mounted the brow of the executioner at the interruption.

"Touch the spring, man! What are you waiting for?" demanded the sheriff, gruffly.

The man employed for the purpose made a move to obey.

"In Heaven's name stop this mad work! You are about to hang an innocent man!"

There was a commotion in the crowd. Evidently some one was forcing his way toward the scaffold.

"It's only a drunken man. Do your duty!" ordered the sheriff, sternly.

But the man addressed, hesitated. It was well that he did so, for while he stood glaring at the swaying crowd a man burst through the line of guards and stood revealed at the foot of the scaffold steps.

"Stop the execution!" cried the newcomer, pantingly. "Walter Clawson is innocent! I am the man for whom he was to die—I am Oscar Clawson!"

All eyes were turned upon the speaker. Great commotion ensued. Several old men present recognized the young heir, and when the cap was removed the prisoner uttered the name of his brother and then sank fainting on the scaffold.

It was true. Oscar Clawson was not dead. He had returned barely in time to save his brother from a felon's death.

He confirmed the story told by Walter, and concluded:

"I was but slightly wounded, and the moment Walter left I regained my feet. Walter had declared me an interloper, and I felt like one. On the spur of the moment, I resolved to leave, and never trouble my people by claiming Eastlawn. I believed Walter was more entitled to it than myself, and in the gloom of night I fled.

"Only two days ago I picked up a paper wherein was the announcement of my murder, and the conviction of Walter Clawson for the crime. I was horrified to note the fact that the date on the paper was an old one. With all speed I made my way here, and, thank God, have come in time!"

Yes, he had come in time. The body in the creek was never identified. Doubtless the person was accidentally drowned. Walter lived to marry Ida, and on the wedding day Oscar deeded one-half his inheritance to the fair bride.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

\$10,000 FOR A HOG

An Iowa firm has become the possessor of Nebraska's highest priced hog. Uneeda Orion, a Duroc Jersey boar, was sold by Edgar Taylor of Norfolk to Suder Bros., of Wesley, Ia., for \$10,000.

CENT GROWS INTO \$3,000,000 IF PYRAMIDED FOR 31 DAYS

If one could have a cent the first day of the month, two cents on the next day, four cents the next, and so on, doubling the amount each day, he would have nearly \$3,000,000 at the end of a month of thirty-one days.

PREPARED HIS OWN GRAVE

Elijah Warden, ninety-four years of age, the oldest resident of White County, died at his home in Monticello, Ind., recently. Mr. Warden was born in Delphi and was the grandson of the French trader, Dubois, for whom Dubois County was named. He lived in White County eighty years.

Mr. Warden was widely known in northern Indiana as a house mover and engaged in that occupation, until about three years ago. He was sexton at the Monticello Cemetery for thirty years, and dug his own grave and prepared the vault.

OFF TO ALASKA TO GET REINDEER FOOD

William C. Redfield, erstwhile Secretary of Commerce and promoter of shark skin shoes, is about to be eclipsed. Dr. Edward K. Nelson, chief of the Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture, is en route to Alaska to make friends with the reindeer with the idea of making this Eskimo food staple an important addition to the American diet. Since 1893 the Alaskan herds have increased from 143 animals to 150,000.

Aside from their association with Santa Claus reindeer are noted as the prize boobs of the animal kingdom, surpassing even sheep in that respect.

FIRST WHALE SHARK CAPTURED

The first whale shark ever captured is on exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D. C., Capt. Charles Thompson, of Miami,

Fla., who has some big fish captures to his credit, including the largest devil fish ever lifted to land, is the captor of this monster. He caught it while cruising off Knight's Key. It took twenty men nearly two days to bring it ashore. The net weight of the fish is 30,000 pounds, its length is forty-five feet and its circumference at the thickest part is twenty-three feet nine inches. The tail measures ten feet from tip to tip.

The scientists who looked this fish over said that he was only an infant whale shark and that full grown ones are two and one-half times as large. It inhabits the ocean at a depth of 1,500 feet and its hide is of great thickness to withstand the enormous water pressure. A .45-calibre bullet could not even dent it.

How this baby whale shark happened to come to the surface is conjecture, one explanation being that it was thrown up by a submarine volcanic disturbance and that in the journey its deep sea diving powers were injured so that it was unable to sink to its natural water level.

The whale shark has little circular lidless eyes that are sightless. Its mouth is fifty inches wide and forty-three inches deep, its tongue is forty inches long. Hundreds of teeth line the sides of the jaw. It had a speed on the surface of forty-five miles an hour and put up a fight before being captured that lasted two days and a half.

LAUGHS

"But," protested the broker who had advertised for a confidential clerk, "you want too much salary." "I've had a great deal of experience in the brokerage business," urged the applicant. "But you ask too much for it." "My dear sir, I assure you I'm offering it to you for much less than it cost me."

A bright young man recently visited a friend of his mother. She asked about his mother, and inquired if she raised a good deal of poultry this year. The young man scratched his head in perplexity, and then replied: "N-n-no, ma'am. She planted a good deal, but the chickens scratched it all up."

"Lady," said Plodding Pete, "have you any more of dat mince pie dat you can't use yourself?" "Yes. Here's nearly half of it. Are you going to eat it all?" "No, lady. I hate to be revengeful; but dat dog of yours has an ugly disposition. I'm going to feed it to him."

"I think," said young Trotter, "I'll draw that money Uncle John left to me. I'm thinking of a trip abroad." "But," protested his mother, "you were to save that for a rainy day." "Well, I'm going to London. I'll be sure to find a rainy day there."

Mrs. Testy (looking up from the paper)—Isn't this strange? A man, after a fit of illness, was absolutely unable to remember his wife and did not believe she was the one he married. Mr. Testy—Well, I dunno. It's pretty hard work sometimes for a man to realize that his wife is the same woman that he once went crazy over.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

BALZAC'S JEWELLED CANE

Balzac used to enjoy what was described by a "vanity" from the possession of a walking stick nearly as big as a drum-major's staff, and all ablaze with rubies, diamonds, emeralds and sapphires.

It was topped by a huge gold knob containing a lock of hair presented by an unknown lady admirer. For a long time Balzac never appeared in public without this stick, which increased in value as the years went on.

All the jewels he bought or received as presents were plastered on it, for he preferred using them in this way to wearing them in rings or tie-pins.

WILD DUCKS IN DAKOTA

Recent reports from the South Dakota State Game Warden's office say that thousands of wild ducks have remained in the numerous sloughs and ponds of the State this summer and are hatching and taking their brood to the water.

It is said some of these birds nest fully half a mile from a body of water, concealing their eggs in tufts of grass and hurry their young to the water as soon as they are hatched. The outlook is favorable for a plentiful supply of young ducks ready for the hunter at the opening of the season.

The number which remained, the report continues, is greater than that of any former year, and this should add to the abundance of the feathered folk to come within range of the hunter's rifle.

BURGLARS ONLY BOOTY, RAINCOAT

A second-hand raincoat, according to officials of Trimble, Tenn., apparently was the only loot obtained there by enterprising robbers, who, working in a double shift, simultaneously blew open the safe of the post office and knocked off the combination of the vault of the Farmers Bank.

The post office building was wrecked by the explosion. The blast aroused citizens sleeping near by, and their hurried assembling frightened away the robbers, who were pursued as far as Obion, four miles north of Trimble, where the trail was lost. Four men are believed by officials of the town to have taken part in the attempted robbery.

The raincoat, the property of the cashier, was the only thing missing from the bank, it was announced. The bank and post office are situated on opposite sides of an ally.

RENT PROBLEM IS SIMPLE IN BORNEO

The Dyak women are chiefly occupied with weaving, dyeing, cooking, planting the seed and taking care of the children and the house. House-keeping in Borneo has its own complications. As a rule a large number of families live under one roof. On an average there may be forty, but instances have been known in which as many as four hundred persons were living together in a single community house.

The houses are constructed on piles, with ladders leading to the outer uncovered veranda

which runs the entire length of the house. This veranda is used more or less as a public highway. Any one passing through the village may climb up the ladder at one end, walk along it and climb down the other end in the most casual manner. Just back of it lies a covered portion of the house and here most of the work is carried on.

The men may be seen building a small boat or making brass jewelry; the women weaving or dyeing or pounding rice into flour for baking. Opening from the veranda is a series of doors leading into separate rooms, one belonging to each family. Here the Dyaks do their cooking, eating and sleeping, except that unmarried girls usually sleep in a loft reached from the rooms, while the boys occupy the inner veranda. A Dyak has but one wife, and either husband or wife, if found guilty of illicit conduct, is subject to severe punishment by the community.

A pleasant trait among the Dyaks is their fondness for their children, whom they have seldom been known to treat with anything but kindness and indulgence. They are also kind to old people—unlike other tribes in Borneo, who formerly followed the custom of killing or burning alive those whose usefulness to the community had been exhausted.—By Gertrude Emerson, in "Aria" for July.

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GOOD READING

RODE BICYCLE TEN MILES EACH DAY
WHEN 98

Dr. Jessie C. Green, 102 years and 7 months old, died at his home in West Chester, Pa., lately as a result of falling from a step ladder in his home ten days ago while hanging a picture.

Dr. Green, who was a Quaker, was born in Delaware County, Pa., Dec. 13, 1817; was a school teacher in early life and later a dentist. "Early to bed and early to rise," was his lifelong motto, he often said. He never used tobacco or intoxicants and drank his last cup of coffee in 1844. Until six years ago he was in the habit of taking a daily ten-mile bicycle ride before breakfast.

He leaves a sister in her eighties and a son about sixty years old.

DRAWS ON STEEL WALL OF JAIL WON-
DERFUL PICTURE OF CHRIST

On a Sunday morning in March, 1917, while he was in the County Jail at San Bernardino, awaiting trial, Ramon Garcia, ex-convict, drew upon the steel wall of his boxlike cell a picture of Christ on the Cross.

John N. Hilliard tells us that, "With the stub of an old pencil borrowed from an accommodating jailer—genius has ever made use of the first tool that comes to hand—he fashioned a remarkable picture.

"And straightway certain events outside of the established order happened. Like concentric rings upon the face of the water the fame of it spread, crossing the Sierras of the Snows, going beyond the Rockies, eventually reaching the Atlantic hinterland.

"The man who had pencilled the picture on the steel wall had long since gone to prison, but the cell he had occupied in the County Jail had become a veritable shrine. And the town of San Bernardino had become a place of great pilgrimage."

Eventually the sentence of the thrice-convicted felon was commuted and already the young Mexican has begun to make good.

"The likeness of Marshal Joffre, done on canvas shortly after Garcia's release from prison, was presented to the Latin-American Institute. It is a remarkable piece of portraiture, when you consider that the man who drew it has had no training, that he had not even a primer knowledge of the craft.

"The portrait of Judge Dewhirst, done from life, is an uncanny likeness. Perhaps the most astonishing work Garcia has so far done, except the drawing of the Crucifixion, is the portrait of Lincoln. This also was drawn with pencil on one of the steel walls of the San Bernardino Jail.

"And it is Lincoln, the Lincoln of humble beginnings, who split rails for a livelihood; who read his books in the wavering light of a pine

nubbin; the patient, kindly man with the smile, the sad eyes, the worn face, who had been lifted up to guide a Nation."

WHY BE A SAPHEAD?

Sap Hawkins imagines himself to be the "wise guy in his own home town," but Sap's imagination is his chief characteristic. When the school teacher told Sap's father, "I can't teach him anything," he thought Sap ripe for wider fields. First, he placed him with the village blacksmith, but this connection ended disastrously for Sap at the end of the second day. In desperation the father then arranged for him to read law in the office of a prosperous firm of attorneys at the county seat.

After he had pursued his studies for two full weeks, Sap and a rainbow silk shirt returned to spend Sunday with the folks.

"Well, Sap," asked one of the crowd around the Palace drug store corner, "How do you like the law?"

"Aw, I don't think much of the law," answered the Blackstone of two weeks; "I'm sorry I ever learnt it."

Strange as it may seem, there are many persons who feel the same way about thrift and saving. They may save spasmodically for a couple of weeks and then bob up serenely with: "I don't think much of it. I'm sorry I learnt it." On the other hand, the person who is determined to give the savings habit a fair trial never fails to enthrall as he sees his efforts bring to him those things which make life really worth while.

It is a healthy sign of the times, for it follows as night the day that individual prosperity means national prosperity.

Insofar as the individual is concerned, he never will be too old to spend but he may grow too old to earn. Never has there been so golden an opportunity to put by a few dollars as now and it is just plain common sense for those to earn while earning is good and set aside something for a happy and contented old age. The way to provide for those days is to save first and spend afterward, to take a certain amount out of the regular income and invest it where it will be safe and will grow.

For the person with an average income, buying Government Savings securities from your bank or Post Office is an ideal procedure for starting a savings account with Uncle Sam. When you have accumulated \$84.00 in Savings Stamps, you can exchange it for a Treasury Savings Certificate which will pay you back an even \$100 on January 1, 1925. When you have learned the real joy of saving you never will be sorry that you "learnt it."

—Buy W. S. S.—

Thrift is Power. Why? Because its practice builds character through leading to the right use of money; enable opportunities to be taken advantage of because money is in hand. Be Thrifty. Spend wisely, save steadily, buy Government Saving Stamps, "Always worth more than was paid for them."

ABOUT TEMPERING COPPER

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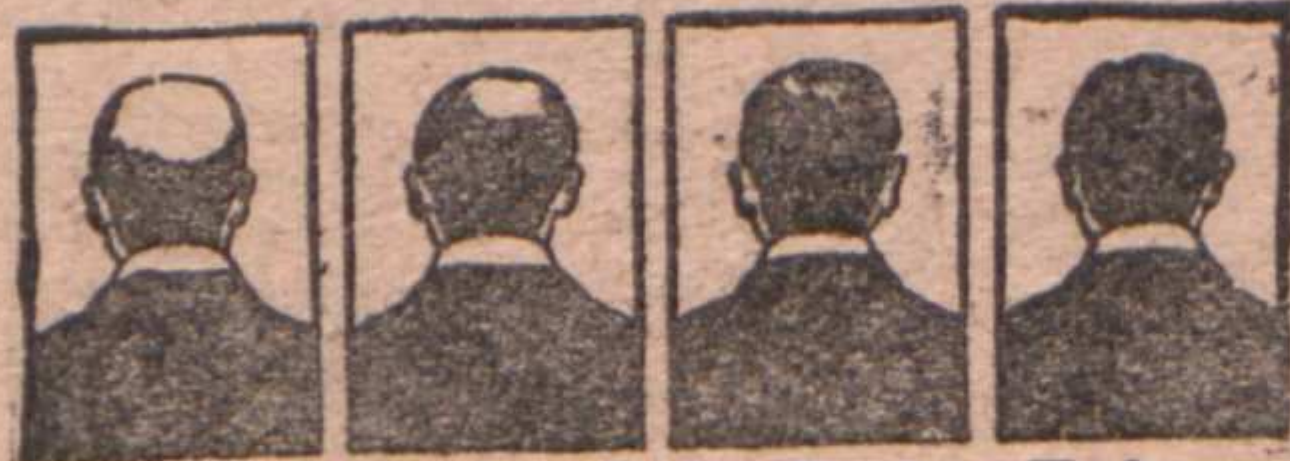
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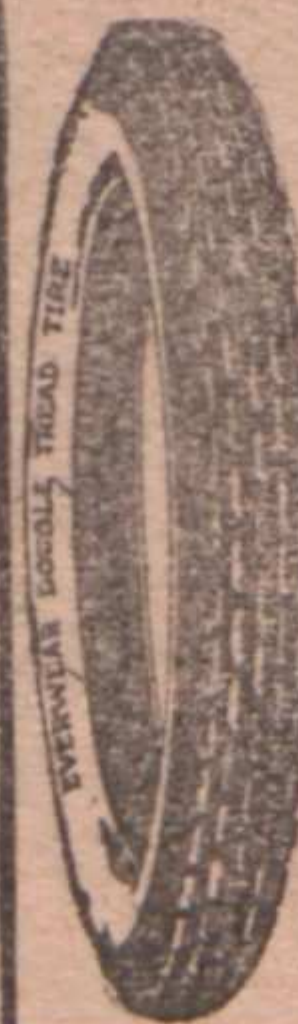
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The rapid propagation of smells noticed in the open air appears due entirely to currents, since in small tubes, where currents do not exist, the rate is found to be very small. Experiments along this line were first undertaken in England by Prof. Ayrton. With ammonia diffusing through a tube a meter and a half long, over two hours elapsed before the smell could be detected at the other end of the tube. Using different lengths of tubing, it was found that the time required for the diffusion of the smell was roughly proportioned to the square of the length. Ammonia and hydrogen sulphide were used for these experiments. The presence of ammonia could be detected chemically at a point in a tube after about the same time as when the sense of smell was used for a detector. The rate of propagation of the smell of ammonia was not markedly different when this had to pass along the same tube either horizontally or vertically upward or vertically downward. With camphor, however, while the rates horizontally and downward were about the same, the speed upward was about twice as great.

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20	8	9	19
6	15	18	4
1	21	20	15
6	18	5	5

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The letters of the alphabet are numbered: A is 1; B 2; C 3; D 4, and so on. The figures in the little squares to the left represent four words. (20 is the letter "T"). What are the four words? Can you work it out? If so, send your answer quick. Surely you want this fine, new Ford auto. Send no money with solution.

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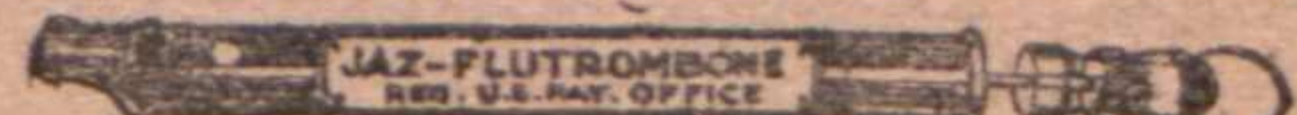
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